Happy Mother's Day

to Mom,

May 13, 1962

Love,

Bob

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PART ONE

JUST FOLKS

Just Folks

By

Edgar A. Guest

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Just Folks

We're queer folks here.
  We'll talk about the weather,
  The good times we have had together,
The good times near,
  The roses buddin', an' the bees
  Once more upon their nectar sprees;
  The scarlet fever scare, an' who
  Came mighty near not pullin' through,
  An' who had light attacks, an' all
  The things that int'rest, big or small;
But here you'll never hear of sinnin'
Or any scandal that's beginnin'.
We've got too many other labors
To scatter tales that harm our neighbors.

We're strange folks here.
  We're tryin' to be cheerful,
  An' keep this home from gettin' tearful.
We hold it dear;
  Too dear for pettiness an' meanness,
  An' nasty tales of men's uncleanness.
  Here you shall come to joyous smilin',
  Secure from hate an' harsh revilin';
  Here, where the wood fire brightly blazes,
  You'll hear from us our neighbor's praises.

Here, that they'll never grow to doubt us,
We keep our friends always about us;
An' here, though storms outside may pelter
Is refuge for our friends, an' shelter.

We've one rule here,
  An' that is to be pleasant.
  The folks we know are always present,
Or very near.
  An' though they dwell in many places,
  We think we're talkin' to their faces;
  An' that keeps us from only seein'
  The faults in any human bein',
  An' checks our tongues when they'd go trailin'
  Into the mire of mortal failin'.
Flaws aren't so big when folks are near you;
You don't talk mean when they can hear you.
An' so no scandal here is started,
Because from friends we're never parted.

As It Goes

In the corner she's left the mechanical toy,
  On the chair is her Teddy Bear fine;
The things that I thought she would really enjoy
  Don't seem to be quite in her line.

There's the flaxen-haired doll that is lovely to see
And really expensively dressed,
Left alone, all uncared for, and strange though it be,
She likes her rag dolly the best.

Oh, the money we spent and the plans that we laid
And the wonderful things that we bought!
There are toys that are cunningly, skillfully made,
But she seems not to give them a thought.
She was pleased when she woke and discovered them there,
But never a one of us guessed
That it isn't the splendor that makes a gift rare—
She likes her rag dolly the best.

There's the flaxen-haired doll, with the real human hair,
There's the Teddy Bear left all alone,
There's the automobile at the foot of the stair,
And there is her toy telephone;
We thought they were fine, but a little child's eyes
Look deeper than ours to find charm,
And now she's in bed, and the rag dolly lies
Snuggled close on her little white arm.

Hollyhocks

Old-fashioned flowers! I love them all:
The morning-glories on the wall,
The pansies in their patch of shade,
The violets, stolen from a glade,
The bleeding hearts and columbine,
Have long been garden friends of mine;
But memory every summer flocks
About a clump of hollyhocks.

The mother loved them years ago;
Beside the fence they used to grow,
And though the garden changed each year
And certain blooms would disappear
To give their places in the ground
To something new that mother found,
Some pretty bloom or rosebush rare—
The hollyhocks were always there.

It seems but yesterday to me
She led me down the yard to see
The first tall spires, with bloom aflame,
And taught me to pronounce their name.
And year by year I watched them grow,
The first flowers I had come to know.
And with the mother dear I'd yearn
To see the hollyhocks return.

The garden of my boyhood days
With hollyhocks was kept ablaze;
In all my recollections they
In friendly columns nod and sway;
And when to-day their blooms I see,
Always the mother smiles at me;
The mind's bright chambers, life unlocks
Each summer with the hollyhocks.

Sacrifice

When he has more than he can eat
To feed a stranger's not a feat.

When he has more than he can spend
It isn't hard to give or lend.

Who gives but what he'll never miss
Will never know what giving is.

He'll win few praises from his Lord
Who does but what he can afford.

The widow's mite to heaven went
Because real sacrifice it meant.

Reward

Don't want medals on my breast,
  Don't want all the glory,
I'm not worrying greatly lest
  The world won't hear my story.
A chance to dream beside a stream
  Where fish are biting free;
A day or two, 'neath skies of blue,
  Is joy enough for me.

I do not ask a hoard of gold,
  Nor treasures rich and rare;
I don't want all the joys to hold;
  I only want a share.
Just now and then, away from men
  And all their haunts of pride,
If I can steal, with rod and reel,
  I will be satisfied.

I'll gladly work my way through life;
  I would not always play;
I only ask to quit the strife
  For an occasional day.
If I can sneak from toil a week
  To chum with stream and tree,
I'll fish away and smiling say
  That life's been good to me.

See It Through

When you're up against a trouble,
Meet it squarely, face to face;
Lift your chin and set your shoulders,
Plant your feet and take a brace.
When it's vain to try to dodge it,
Do the best that you can do;
You may fail, but you may conquer,
See it through!

Black may be the clouds about you
And your future may seem grim,
But don't let your nerve desert you;
Keep yourself in fighting trim.
If the worst is bound to happen,
Spite of all that you can do,
Running from it will not save you,
See it through!

Even hope may seem but futile,
When with troubles you're beset,
But remember you are facing
Just what other men have met.
You may fail, but fall still fighting;
Don't give up, whate'er you do;
Eyes front, head high to the finish.
See it through!

To the Humble

If all the flowers were roses,
  If never daisies grew,
If no old-fashioned posies
  Drank in the morning dew,
Then man might have some reason
  To whimper and complain,
And speak these words of treason,
  That all our toil is vain.

If all the stars were Saturns
  That twinkle in the night,
Of equal size and patterns,
  And equally as bright,
Then men in humble places,
  With humble work to do,
With frowns upon their faces
  Might trudge their journey through.

But humble stars and posies
  Still do their best, although
They're planets not, nor roses,
  To cheer the world below.
And those old-fashioned daisies
  Delight the soul of man;
They're here, and this their praise is:
  They work the Master's plan.

Though humble be your labor,
And modest be your sphere,
Come, envy not your neighbor
Whose light shines brighter here.
Does God forget the daisies
Because the roses bloom?
Shall you not win His praises
By toiling at your loom?

Have you, the toiler humble,
Just reason to complain,
To shirk your task and grumble
And think that it is vain
Because you see a brother
With greater work to do?
No fame of his can smother
The merit that's in you.

When Nellie's on the Job

The bright spots in my life are when the servant
quits the place,
Although that grim disturbance brings a frown
to Nellie's face;
The week between the old girl's reign and entry
of the new
is one that's filled with happiness and comfort
through and through.
The charm of living's back again—a charm that
servants rob—
I like the home, I like the meals, when Nellie's
on the job.

There's something in a servant's ways, however
fine they be,
That has a cold and distant touch and frets the
soul of me.
The old home never looks so well, as in that
week or two
That we are servantless and Nell has all the
work to do.
There is a sense of comfort then that makes my
pulses throb
And home is as it ought to be when Nellie's on
the job.

Think not that I'd deny her help or grudge the
servant's pay;
When one departs we try to get another right
away;
I merely state the simple fact that no such joys
I've known
As in those few brief days at home when we've
been left alone.
There is a gentleness that seems to soothe this
selfish elf
And, Oh, I like to eat those meals that Nellie
gets herself!

You cannot buy the gentle touch that mother
gives the place;
No servant girl can do the work with just the
proper grace.
And though you hired the queen of cooks to
fashion your croquettes,
Her meals would not compare with those your
loving comrade gets;
So, though the maid has quit again, and she is
moved to sob,
The old home's at its finest now, for Nellie's
on the job.

The Old, Old Story

I have no wish to rail at fate,
And vow that I'm unfairly treated;
I do not give vent to my hate
Because at times I am defeated.
Life has its ups and downs, I know,
But tell me why should people say
Whenever after fish I go:
"You should have been here yesterday"?

It is my luck always to strike
A day when there is nothing doing,
When neither perch, nor bass, nor pike
My baited hooks will come a-wooing.
Must I a day late always be?
When not a nibble comes my way
Must someone always say to me:
"We caught a bunch here yesterday"?

I am not prone to discontent,
Nor over-zealous now to climb;
If victory is not yet meant
For me I'll calmly bide my time.
But I should like just once to go
Out fishing on some lake or bay
And not have someone mutter: "Oh,
You should have been here yesterday."

The Pup

He tore the curtains yesterday,
And scratched the paper on the wall;
Ma's rubbers, too, have gone astray—
She says she left them in the hall;
He tugged the table cloth and broke
A fancy saucer and a cup;
Though Bud and I think it a joke
Ma scolds a lot about the pup.

The sofa pillows are a sight,
The rugs are looking somewhat frayed,
And there is ruin, left and right,
That little Boston bull has made.
He slept on Buddy's counterpane—
Ma found him there when she woke up.
I think it needless to explain
She scolds a lot about the pup.

And yet he comes and licks her hand
And sometimes climbs into her lap
And there, Bud lets me understand,
He very often takes his nap.
And Bud and I have learned to know
She wouldn't give the rascal up:
She's really fond of him, although
She scolds a lot about the pup.

Since Jessie Died

We understand a lot of things we never did
before,
And it seems that to each other Ma and I are
meaning more.
I don't know how to say it, but since little Jessie
died
We have learned that to be happy we must travel
side by side.
You can share your joys and pleasures, but you
never come to know
The depth there is in loving, till you've got a
common woe.

We're past the hurt of fretting—we can talk
about it now:
She slipped away so gently and the fever left
her brow
So softly that we didn't know we'd lost her, but,
instead,
We thought her only sleeping as we watched
beside her bed.
Then the doctor, I remember, raised his head, as
if to say
What his eyes had told already, and Ma fainted
dead away.

Up to then I thought that money was the thing
I ought to get;
And I fancied, once I had it, I should never have
to fret.
But I saw that I had wasted precious hours in
seeking wealth;
I had made a tidy fortune, but I couldn't buy
her health.
And I saw this truth much clearer than I'd ever
seen before:
That the rich man and the poor man have to let
death through the door.

We're not half so keen for money as one time
we used to be;
I am thinking more of mother and she's think-
ing more of me.
Now we spend more time together, and I know
we're meaning more
To each other on life's journey, than we ever
meant before.
It was hard to understand it! Oh, the dreary
nights we've cried!
But we've found the depth of loving, since the
day that Jessie died.

Hard Luck

Ain't no use as I can see
In sittin' underneath a tree
An' growlin' that your luck is bad,
An' that your life is extry sad;
Your life ain't sadder than your neighbor's
Nor any harder are your labors;
It rains on him the same as you,
An' he has work he hates to do;
An' he gits tired an' he gits cross,
An' he has trouble with the boss;
You take his whole life, through an' through,
Why, he's no better off than you.

If whinin' brushed the clouds away
I wouldn't have a word to say;
If it made good friends out o' foes
I'd whine a bit, too, I suppose;
But when I look around an' see
A lot o' men resemblin' me,
An' see 'em sad, an' see 'em gay
With work t' do most every day,
Some full o' fun, some bent with care,
Some havin' troubles hard to bear,
I reckon, as I count my woes,
They're 'bout what everybody knows.

The day I find a man who'll say
He's never known a rainy day,

Who'll raise his right hand up an' swear
In forty years he's had no care,
Has never had a single blow,
An' never known one touch o' woe,
Has never seen a loved one die,
Has never wept or heaved a sigh,
Has never had a plan go wrong,
But allus laughed his way along;
Then I'll sit down an' start to whine
That all the hard luck here is mine.

Vacation Time

Vacation time! How glad it seemed
When as a boy I sat and dreamed
Above my school books, of the fun
That I should claim when toil was done;
And, Oh, how oft my youthful eye
Went wandering with the patch of sky
That drifted by the window panes
O'er pleasant fields and dusty lanes,
Where I would race and romp and shout
The very moment school was out.
My artful little fingers then
Feigned labor with the ink and pen,
But heart and mind were far away,
Engaged in some glad bit of play.

The last two weeks dragged slowly by;
Time hadn't then learned how to fly.
It seemed the clock upon the wall
From hour to hour could only crawl,
And when the teacher called my name,
Unto my cheeks the crimson came,
For I could give no answer clear
To questions that I didn't hear.
"Wool gathering, were you?" oft she said
And smiled to see me blushing red.
Her voice had roused me from a dream
Where I was fishing in a stream,
And, if I now recall it right,
Just at the time I had a bite.

And now my youngsters dream of play
In just the very selfsame way;
And they complain that time is slow
And that the term will never go.
Their little minds with plans are filled
For joyous hours they soon will build,
And it is vain for me to say,
That have grown old and wise and gray,
That time is swift, and joy is brief;
They'll put no faith in such belief.
To youthful hearts that long for play
Time is a laggard on the way.
'Twas, Oh, so slow to me back then
Ere I had learned the ways of men!

The Little Hurts

Every night she runs to me
With a bandaged arm or a bandaged knee,
A stone-bruised heel or a swollen brow,
And in sorrowful tones she tells me how
She fell and "hurted herse'f to-day"
While she was having the "bestest play."

And I take her up in my arms and kiss
The new little wounds and whisper this:
"Oh, you must be careful, my little one,
You mustn't get hurt while your daddy's gone,
For every cut with its ache and smart
Leaves another bruise on your daddy's heart."

Every night I must stoop to see
The fresh little cuts on her arm or knee;
The little hurts that have marred her play,
And brought the tears on a happy day;
For the path of childhood is oft beset
With care and trouble and things that fret.

Oh, little girl, when you older grow,
Far greater hurts than these you'll know;
Greater bruises will bring your tears,
Around the bend of the lane of years,
But come to your daddy with them at night
And he'll do his best to make all things right.

The Lanes of Memory

Adown the lanes of memory bloom all the
flowers of yesteryear,
And looking back we smile to see life's bright
red roses reappear,
The little sprigs of mignonette that smiled upon
us as we passed,
The pansy and the violet, too sweet, we thought
those days, to last.

The gentle mother by the door caresses still her
lilac blooms,
And as we wander back once more we seem to
smell the old perfumes,
We seem to live again the joys that once were
ours so long ago
When we were little girls and boys, with all the
charms we used to know.

But living things grow old and fade; the dead
in memory remain,
In all their splendid youth arrayed, exempt from
suffering and pain;
The little babe God called away, so many, many
years ago,
Is still a little babe to-day, and I am glad that
this is so.

Time has not changed the joys we knew; the
summer rains or winter snows
Have failed to harm the wondrous hue of any
dew-kissed bygone rose;
In memory 'tis still as fair as when we plucked
it for our own,
And we can see it blooming there, if anything,
more lovely grown.

Adown the lanes of memory bloom all the joys
of yesteryear,
And God has given you and me the power to
make them reappear;
For we can settle back at night and live again
the joys we knew
And taste once more the old delight of days
when all our skies were blue.

The Day of Days

A year is filled with glad events:
The best is Christmas day,
But every holiday presents
Its special round of play,
And looking back on boyhood now
And all the charms it knew,
One day, above the rest, somehow,
Seems brightest in review.

That day was finest, I believe,
Though many grown-ups scoff,
When mother said that we could leave
Our shoes and stockings off.

Through all the pleasant days of spring
We begged to know once more
The joy of barefoot wandering
And quit the shoes we wore;
But always mother shook her head
And answered with a smile:
"It is too soon, too soon," she said.
"Wait just a little while."
Then came that glorious day at last
When mother let us know
That fear of taking cold was past
And we could barefoot go.

Though Christmas day meant much to me,
And eagerly I'd try
The first boy on the street to be
The Fourth day of July,
I think the summit of my joy
Was reached that happy day
Each year, when, as a barefoot boy,
I hastened out to play.
Could I return to childhood fair,
That day I think I'd choose
When mother said I needn't wear
My stockings and my shoes.

A Fine Sight

I reckon the finest sight of all
That a man can see in this world of ours
Ain't the works of art on the gallery wall,
Or the red an' white o' the fust spring flowers,
Or a hoard o' gold from the yellow mines;
But the sight that'll make ye want t' yell
Is t' catch a glimpse o' the fust pink signs
In yer baby's cheek, that she's gittin well.

When ye see the pink jes' a-creepin' back
T' the pale, drawn cheek, an' ye note a smile,
Then th' cords o' yer heart that were tight, grow slack
An' ye jump fer joy every little while,
An' ye tiptoe back to her little bed
As though ye doubted yer eyes, or were
Afraid it was fever come back instead,
An' ye found that th' pink still blossomed there.

Ye've watched fer that smile an' that bit o' bloom
With a heavy heart fer weeks an' weeks;
An' a castle o' joy becomes that room
When ye glimpse th' pink in yer baby's cheeks.
An' out o' yer breast flies a weight o' care,
An' ye're lifted up by some magic spell,
An' yer heart jes' naturally beats a prayer
O' joy to the Lord 'cause she's gittin' well.

Manhood's Greeting

I've felt some little thrills of pride, I've inwardly rejoiced
Along the pleasant lanes of life to hear my praises voiced;
No great distinction have I claimed, but in a humble way
Some satisfactions sweet have come to brighten many a day;
But of the joyous thrills of life the finest that could be
Was mine upon that day when first a stranger "mistered" me.

I had my first long trousers on, and wore a derby too,
But I was still a little boy to everyone I knew.
I dressed in manly fashion, and I tried to act the part,
But I felt that I was awkward and lacked the manly art.
And then that kindly stranger spoke my name and set me free;
I was sure I'd come to manhood on the day he "mistered" me.

I never shall forget the joy that suddenly was mine,
The sweetness of the thrill that seemed to dance along my spine,
The pride that swelled within me, as he shook my youthful hand
And treated me as big enough with grown up men to stand.
I felt my body straighten and a stiffening at each knee,
And was gloriously happy, just because he'd "mistered" me.

I cannot now recall his name, I only wish I could.
I've often wondered if that day he really understood
How much it meant unto a boy, still wearing boyhood's tan,
To find that others noticed that he'd grown to be a man.
Now I try to treat as equal every growing boy I see
In memory of that kindly man—the first to "mister" me.

"Men will grow weary," said the Lord,
"Of working for their bed and board.
They'll weary of the money chase
And want to find a resting place
Where hum of wheel is never heard
And no one speaks an angry word,
And selfishness and greed and pride
And petty motives don't abide.
They'll need a place where they can go
To wash their souls as white as snow.
They will be better men and true
If they can play a day or two."

The Lord then made the brooks to flow
And fashioned rivers here below,
And many lakes; for water seems
Best suited for a mortal's dreams.
He placed about them willow trees
To catch the murmur of the breeze,
And sent the birds that sing the best
Among the foliage to nest.
He filled each pond and stream and lake
With fish for man to come and take;
Then stretched a velvet carpet deep
On which a weary soul could sleep.

It seemed to me the Good Lord knew
That man would want something to do

When worn and wearied with the stress
Of battling hard for world success.
When sick at heart of all the strife
And pettiness of daily life,
He knew he'd need, from time to time,
To cleanse himself of city grime,
And he would want some place to be
Where hate and greed he'd never see.
And so on lakes and streams and brooks
The Good Lord fashioned fishing nooks.

Show the Flag

Show the flag and let it wave
As a symbol of the brave;
Let it float upon the breeze
As a sign for each who sees
That beneath it, where it rides,
Loyalty to-day abides.

Show the flag and signify
That it wasn't born to die;
Let its colors speak for you
That you still are standing true,
True in sight of God and man
To the work that flag began.

Show the flag that all may see
That you serve humanity.
Let it whisper to the breeze
That comes singing through the trees
That whatever storms descend
You'll be faithful to the end.

Show the flag and let it fly,
Cheering every passer-by.
Men that may have stepped aside,
May have lost their old-time pride,
May behold it there, and then,
Consecrate themselves again.

Show the flag! The day is gone
When men blindly hurry on
Serving only gods of gold;
Now the spirit that was cold
Warms again to courage fine.
Show the flag and fall in line!

Constant Beauty

It's good to have the trees again, the singing of
the breeze again,
It's good to see the lilacs bloom as lovely as
of old.
It's good that we can feel again the touch of
beauties real again,

For hearts and minds, of sorrow now, have all that they can hold.

The roses haven't changed a bit, nor have the lilacs stranged a bit,
They bud and bloom the way they did before the war began.
The world is upside down to-day, there's much to make us frown to-day,
And gloom and sadness everywhere beset the path of man.

But now the lilacs bloom again and give us their perfume again,
And now the roses smile at us and nod along the way;
And it is good to see again the blossoms on each tree again,
And feel that nature hasn't changed the way we have to-day.

Oh, we have changed from what we were; we're not the carefree lot we were;
Our hearts are filled with sorrow now and grave concern and pain,
But it is good to see once more, the blooming lilac tree once more,
And find the constant roses here to comfort us again.

A Patriotic Creed

To serve my country day by day
At any humble post I may;
To honor and respect her flag,
To live the traits of which I brag;
To be American in deed
As well as in my printed creed.

To stand for truth and honest toil,
To till my little patch of soil,
And keep in mind the debt I owe
To them who died that I might know
My country, prosperous and free,
And passed this heritage to me.

I always must in trouble's hour
Be guided by the men in power;
For God and country I must live,
My best for God and country give;
No act of mine that men may scan
Must shame the name American.

To do my best and play my part,
American in mind and heart;
To serve the flag and bravely stand
To guard the glory of my land;
To be American in deed:
God grant me strength to keep this creed!

Home

The road to laughter beckons me,
  The road to all that's best;
The home road where I nightly see
  The castle of my rest;
The path where all is fine and fair,
  And little children run,
For love and joy are waiting there
  As soon as day is done.

There is no rich reward of fame
  That can compare with this:
At home I wear an honest name,
  My lips are fit to kiss.
At home I'm always brave and strong,
  And with the setting sun
They find no trace of shame or wrong
  In anything I've done.

There shine the eyes that only see
  The good I've tried to do;
They think me what I'd like to be;
  They know that I am true.
And whether I have lost my fight
  Or whether I have won,
I find a faith that I've been right
  As soon as day is done.

It makes me smile to hear 'em tell each other
nowadays
The burdens they are bearing, with a child or
two to raise.
Of course the cost of living has gone soaring
to the sky
And our kids are wearing garments that my par-
ents couldn't buy.
Now my father wasn't wealthy, but I never
heard him squeal
Because eight of us were sitting at the table
every meal.

People fancy they are martyrs if their children
number three,
And four or five they reckon makes a large-
sized family.
A dozen hungry youngsters at a table I have
seen
And their daddy didn't grumble when they
licked the platter clean.
Oh, I wonder how these mothers and these
fathers up-to-date
Would like the job of buying little shoes for
seven or eight.

We were eight around the table in those happy
days back them,

Eight that cleaned our plates of pot-pie and then
passed them up again;
Eight that needed shoes and stockings, eight to
wash and put to bed,
And with mighty little money in the purse, as I
have said,
But with all the care we brought them, and
through all the days of stress,
I never heard my father or my mother wish for
less.

The Job

The job will not make you, my boy;
The job will not bring you to fame
Or riches or honor or joy
Or add any weight to your name.
You may fail or succeed where you are,
May honestly serve or may rob;
From the start to the end
Your success will depend
On just what you make of your job.

Don't look on the job as the thing
That shall prove what you're able to do;
The job does no more than to bring
A chance for promotion to you.

Men have shirked in high places and won
Very justly the jeers of the mob;
And you'll find it is true
That it's all up to you
To say what shall come from the job.

The job is an incident small;
The thing that's important is man.
The job will not help you at all
If you won't do the best that you can.
It is you that determines your fate,
You stand with your hand on the knob
Of fame's doorway to-day,
And life asks you to say
Just what you will make of your job.

Toys

I can pass up the lure of a jewel to wear
With never the trace of a sigh,
The things on a shelf that I'd like for myself
I never regret I can't buy.
I can go through the town passing store after store
Showing things it would please me to own,
With never a trace of despair on my face,
But I can't let a toy shop alone.

I can throttle the love of fine raiment to death
And I don't know the craving for rum,
But I do know the joy that is born of a toy,
And the pleasure that comes with a drum.
I can reckon the value of money at times,
And govern my purse strings with sense,
But I fall for a toy for my girl or my boy
And never regard the expense.

It's seldom I sigh for unlimited gold
Or the power of a rich man to buy;
My courage is stout when the doing without
Is only my duty, but I
Curse the shackles of thrift when I gaze at the toys
That my kiddies are eager to own,
And I'd buy everything that they wish for, by Jing!
If their mother would let me alone.

There isn't much fun spending coin on myself
For neckties and up-to-date lids,
But there's pleasure tenfold, in the silver and gold
I part with for things for the kids.
I can go through the town passing store after store
Showing things it would please me to own,
But to thrift I am lost; I won't reckon the cost
When I'm left in a toy shop alone.

The Mother on the Sidewalk

The mother on the sidewalk as the troops are marching by
Is the mother of Old Glory that is waving in the sky.
Men have fought to keep it splendid, men have died to keep it bright,
But that flag was born of woman and her sufferings day and night;
'Tis her sacrifice has made it, and once more we ought to pray
For the brave and loyal mother of the boy who goes away.

There are days of grief before her; there are hours that she will weep;
There are nights of anxious waiting when her fear will banish sleep;
She has heard her country calling and has risen to the test,
And has placed upon the altar of the nation's need, her best.
And no man shall ever suffer in the turmoil of the fray
The anguish of the mother of the boy who goes away.

You may boast men's deeds of glory, you may tell their courage great,

But to die is easier service than alone to sit and wait,
And I hail the little mother, with the tear-stained face and grave,
Who has given the flag a soldier—she's the bravest of the brave.
And that banner we are proud of, with its red and blue and white,
Is a lasting holy tribute to all mothers' love of right.

Memorial Day

The finest tribute we can pay
Unto our hero dead to-day,
Is not a rose wreath, white and red,
In memory of the blood they shed;
It is to stand beside each mound,
Each couch of consecrated ground,
And pledge ourselves as warriors true
Unto the work they died to do.

Into God's valleys where they lie
At rest, beneath the open sky,
Triumphant now o'er every foe,
As living tributes let us go.
No wreath of rose or immortelles
Or spoken word or tolling bells

Will do to-day, unless we give
Our pledge that liberty shall live.

Our hearts must be the roses red
We place above our hero dead;
To-day beside their graves we must
Renew allegiance to their trust;
Must bare our heads and humbly say
We hold the Flag as dear as they,
And stand, as once they stood, to die
To keep the Stars and Stripes on high.

The finest tribute we can pay
Unto our hero dead to-day
Is not of speech or roses red,
But living, throbbing hearts instead,
That shall renew the pledge they sealed
With death upon the battlefield:
That freedom's flag shall bear no stain
And free men wear no tyrant's chain.

Memory

I stood and watched him playing,
A little lad of three,
And back to me came straying
The years that used to be;

In him the boy was Maying
Who once belonged to me.

The selfsame brown his eyes were
As those that once I knew;
As glad and gay his cries were,
He owned his laughter, too.
His features, form and size were
My baby's, through and through.

His ears were those I'd sung to;
His chubby little hands
Were those that I had clung to;
His hair in golden strands
It seemed my heart was strung to
By love's unbroken bands.

With him I lived the old days
That seem so far away;
The beautiful and bold days
When he was here to play;
The sunny and the gold days
Of that remembered May.

I know not who he may be
Nor where his home may be,
But I shall every day be
In hope again to see
The image of the baby
Who once belonged to me.

The Stick-Together Families

The stick-together families are happier by far
Than the brothers and the sisters who take separate highways are.
The gladdest people living are the wholesome folks who make
A circle at the fireside that no power but death can break.
And the finest of conventions ever held beneath the sun
Are the little family gatherings when the busy day is done.

There are rich folk, there are poor folk, who imagine they are wise,
And they're very quick to shatter all the little family ties.
Each goes searching after pleasure in his own selected way,
Each with strangers likes to wander, and with strangers likes to play.
But it's bitterness they harvest, and it's empty joy they find,
For the children that are wisest are the stick-together kind.

There are some who seem to fancy that for
gladness they must roam,
That for smiles that are the brightest they must
wander far from home.
That the strange friend is the true friend, and
they travel far astray
And they waste their lives in striving for a joy
that's far away,
But the gladdest sort of people, when the busy
day is done,
Are the brothers and the sisters who together
share their fun.

It's the stick-together family that wins the joys
of earth,
That hears the sweetest music and that finds the
finest mirth;
It's the old home roof that shelters all the charm
that life can give;
There you find the gladdest play-ground, there
the happiest spot to live.
And, O weary, wandering brother, if content-
ment you would win,
Come you back unto the fireside and be comrade
with your kin.

Childless

If certain folks that I know well
Should come to me their woes to tell
I'd read the sorrow in their faces
And I could analyze their cases.
I watch some couples day by day
Go madly on their selfish way
Forever seeking happiness
And always finding something less.
If she whose face is fair to see,
Yet lacks one charm that there should be,
Should open wide her heart to-day
I think I know what she would say.

She'd tell me that his love seems cold
And not the love she knew of old;
That for the home they've built to share
No longer does her husband care;
That he seems happier away
Than by her side, and every day
That passes leaves them more apart;
And then perhaps her tears would start
And in a softened voice she'd add:
"Sometimes I wonder, if we had
A baby now to love, if he
Would find so many faults in me?"

And if he came to tell his woe
Just what he'd say to me, I know:

"There's something dismal in the place
That always stares me in the face.
I love her. She is good and sweet
But still my joy is incomplete.
And then it seems to me that she
Can only see the faults in me.
I wonder sometimes if we had
A little girl or little lad,
If life with all its fret and fuss
Would then seem so monotonous?"

And what I'd say to them I know.
I'd bid them straightway forth to go
And find that child and take him in
And start the joy of life to win.
You foolish, hungry souls, I'd say,
You're living in a selfish way.
A baby's arms stretched out to you
Will give you something real to do.
And though God has not sent one down
To you, within this very town
Somewhere a little baby lies
That would bring gladness to your eyes.

You cannot live this life for gold
Or selfish joys. As you grow old
You'll find that comfort only springs
From living for the living things.
And home must be a barren place
That never knows a baby's face.

Take in a child that needs your care,
Give him your name and let him share
Your happiness and you will own
More joy than you have ever known,
And, what is more, you'll come to feel
That you are doing something real.

The Crucible of Life

Sunshine and shadow, blue sky and gray,
Laughter and tears as we tread on our way;
Hearts that are heavy, then hearts that are light,
Eyes that are misty and eyes that are bright;
Losses and gains in the heat of the strife,
Each in proportion to round out his life.

Into the crucible, stirred by the years,
Go all our hopes and misgivings and fears;
Glad days and sad days, our pleasures and pains,
Worries and comforts, our losses and gains.
Out of the crucible shall there not come
Joy undefiled when we pour off the scum?

Out of the sadness and anguish and woe,
Out of the travail and burdens we know,
Out of the shadow that darkens the way,
Out of the failure that tries us to-day,

Have you a doubt that contentment will come
When you've purified life and discarded the
scum?

Tinctured with sorrow and flavored with sighs,
Moistened with tears that have flowed from your
eyes;
Perfumed with sweetness of loves that have died,
Leavened with failures, with grief sanctified,
Sacred and sweet is the joy that must come
From the furnace of life when you've poured off
the scum.

Unimportant Differences

If he is honest, kindly, true,
And glad to work from day to day;
If when his bit of toil is through
With children he will stoop to play;
If he does always what he can
To serve another's time of need,
Then I shall hail him as a man
And never ask him what's his creed.

If he respects a woman's name
And guards her from all thoughtless jeers;
If he is glad to play life's game
And not risk all to get the cheers;

If he disdains to win by bluff
And scorns to gain by shady tricks,
I hold that he is good enough
Regardless of his politics.

If he is glad his much to share
With them who little here possess,
If he will stand by what is fair
And not desert to claim success,
If he will leave a smile behind
As he proceeds from place to place,
He has the proper frame of mind,
And I won't stop to ask his race.

For when at last life's battle ends
And all the troops are called on high
We shall discover many friends
That thoughtlessly we journeyed by.
And we shall learn that God above
Has judged His creatures by their deeds,
That millions there have won His love
Who spoke in different tongues and creeds.

The Fishing Outfit

You may talk of stylish raiment,
You may boast your broadcloth fine,
And the price you gave in payment

May be treble that of mine.
But there's one suit I'd not trade you
Though it's shabby and it's thin,
For the garb your tailor made you:
That's the tattered,
Mud-bespattered
Suit that I go fishing in.

There's no king in silks and laces
And with jewels on his breast,
With whom I would alter places.
There's no man so richly dressed
Or so like a fashion panel
That, his luxuries to win,
I would swap my shirt of flannel
And the rusty,
Frayed and dusty
Suit that I go fishing in.

'Tis an outfit meant for pleasure;
It is freedom's raiment, too;
It's a garb that I shall treasure
Till my time of life is through.
Though perhaps it looks the saddest
Of all robes for mortal skin,
I am proudest and I'm gladdest
In that easy,
Old and greasy
Suit that I go fishing in.

Grown-Up

Last year he wanted building blocks,
And picture books and toys,
A saddle horse that gayly rocks,
And games for little boys.
But now he's big and all that stuff
His whim no longer suits;
He tells us that he's old enough
To ask for rubber boots.

Last year whatever Santa brought
Delighted him to own;
He never gave his wants a thought
Nor made his wishes known.
But now he says he wants a gun,
The kind that really shoots,
And I'm confronted with a son
Demanding rubber boots.

The baby that we used to know
Has somehow slipped away,
And when or where he chanced to go
Not one of us can say.
But here's a helter-skelter lad
That to me nightly scoots
And boldly wishes that he had
A pair of rubber boots.

I'll bet old Santa Claus will sigh
When down our flue he comes,
And seeks the babe that used to lie
And suck his tiny thumbs,
And finds within that little bed
A grown up boy who hoots
At building blocks, and wants instead
A pair of rubber boots.

Departed Friends

The dead friends live and always will;
Their presence hovers round us still.
It seems to me they come to share
Each joy or sorrow that we bear.
Among the living I can feel
The sweet departed spirits steal,
And whether it be weal or woe,
I walk with those I used to know.
I can recall them to my side
Whenever I am struggle-tried;
I've but to wish for them, and they
Come trooping gayly down the way,
And I can tell to them my grief
And from their presence find relief.
In sacred memories below
Still live the friends of long ago.

Laughter

Laughter sort o' settles breakfast better than
digestive pills;
Found it, somehow in my travels, cure for every
sort of ills;
When the hired help have riled me with their
slipshod, careless ways,
An' I'm bilin' mad an' cussin' an' my temper's
all ablaze,
If the calf gets me to laughin' while they're
teachin' him to feed
Pretty soon I'm feelin' better, 'cause I've found
the cure I need.

Like to start the day with laughter; when I've had
a peaceful night,
An' can greet the sun all smilin', that day's goin'
to be all right.
But there's nothing goes to suit me, when my
system's full of bile;
Even horses quit their pullin' when the driver
doesn't smile,
But they'll buckle to the traces when they hear a
glad giddap,
Just as though they like to labor for a cheerful
kind o' chap.

Laughter keeps me strong an' healthy. You can
bet I'm all run down,
Fit for doctor folks an' nurses when I cannot
shake my frown.
Found in farmin' laughter's useful, good for
sheep an' cows an' goats;
When I've laughed my way through summer,
reap the biggest crop of oats.
Laughter's good for any business, leastwise so it
seems to me—
Never knew a smilin' feller but was busy as could
be.

Sometimes sit an' think about it, ponderin' on the
ways of life,
Wonderin' why mortals gladly face the toil an'
care an' strife,
Then I come to this conclusion—take it now for
what it's worth—
It's the joy of laughter keeps us plodding on this
stretch of earth.
Men the fun o' life are seeking—that's the reason
for the calf
Spillin' mash upon his keeper—men are hungry
for a laugh.

If I had lived in Franklin's time I'm most afraid
that I,
Beholding him out in the rain, a kite about to fly,
And noticing upon its tail the barn door's rusty
key,
Would, with the scoffers on the street, have
chortled in my glee;
And with a sneer upon my lips I would have said
of Ben,
"His belfry must be full of bats. He's raving,
boys, again!"

I'm glad I didn't live on earth when Fulton had
his dream,
And told his neighbors marvelous tales of what
he'd do with steam,
For I'm not sure I'd not have been a member of
the throng
That couldn't see how paddle wheels could shove
a boat along.
At "Fulton's Folly" I'd have sneered, as thou-
sands did back then,
And called the Clermont's architect the craziest
of men.

Yet Franklin gave us wonders great and Fulton did the same,
And many "boobs" have left behind an everlasting fame.
And dead are all their scoffers now and all their sneers forgot
And scarce a nickel's worth of good was brought here by the lot.
I shudder when I stop to think, had I been living then,
I might have been a scoffer, too, and jeered at Bob and Ben.

I am afraid to-day to sneer at any fellow's dream.
Time was I thought men couldn't fly or sail beneath the stream.
I never call a man a boob who toils throughout the night
On visions that I cannot see, because he may be right.
I always think of Franklin's trick, which brought the jeers of men,
And to myself I say, "Who knows but here's another Ben?"

The Pathway of the Living

The pathway of the living is our ever-present care.
Let us do our best to smooth it and to make it bright and fair;
Let us travel it with kindness, let's be careful as we tread,
And give unto the living what we'd offer to the dead.

The pathway of the living we can beautify and grace;
We can line it deep with roses and make earth a happier place.
But we've done all mortals can do, when our prayers are softly said
For the souls of those that travel o'er the pathway of the dead.

The pathway of the living all our strength and courage needs,
There we ought to sprinkle favors, there we ought to sow our deeds,
There our smiles should be the brightest, there our kindest words be said,
For the angels have the keeping of the pathway of the dead.

Lemon Pie

The world is full of gladness,
There are joys of many kinds,
There's a cure for every sadness,
That each troubled mortal finds.
And my little cares grow lighter
And I cease to fret and sigh,
And my eyes with joy grow brighter
When she makes a lemon pie.

When the bronze is on the filling
That's one mass of shining gold,
And its molten joy is spilling
On the plate, my heart grows bold.
And the kids and I in chorus
Raise one glad exultant cry
And we cheer the treat before us—
Which is mother's lemon pie.

Then the little troubles vanish,
And the sorrows disappear,
Then we find the grit to banish
All the cares that hovered near,
And we smack our lips in pleasure
O'er a joy no coin can buy,
And we down the golden treasure
Which is known as lemon pie.

The Flag on the Farm

We've raised a flagpole on the farm
And flung Old Glory to the sky,
And it's another touch of charm
That seems to cheer the passer-by,
But more than that, no matter where
We're laboring in wood and field,
We turn and see it in the air,
Our promise of a greater yield.
It whispers to us all day long,
From dawn to dusk: "Be true, be strong;
Who falters now with plow or hoe
Gives comfort to his country's foe."

It seems to me I've never tried
To do so much about the place,
Nor been so slow to come inside,
But since I've got the flag to face,
Each night when I come home to rest
I feel that I must look up there
And say: "Old Flag, I've done my best,
To-day I've tried to do my share."
And sometimes, just to catch the breeze
I stop my work, and o'er the trees
Old Glory fairly shouts my way:
"You're shirking far too much to-day!"

The help have caught the spirit, too;
The hired man takes off his cap

Before the old red, white and blue,
  Then to the horses says: "giddap!"
And starting bravely to the field
  He tells the milkmaid by the door:
"We're going to make these acres yield
  More than they've ever done before."
She smiles to hear his gallant brag,
Then drops a curtsey to the flag.
And in her eyes there seems to shine
A patriotism that is fine.

We've raised a flagpole on the farm
  And flung Old Glory to the sky;
We're far removed from war's alarm,
  But courage here is running high.
We're doing things we never dreamed
  We'd ever find the time to do;
Deeds that impossible once seemed
  Each morning now we hurry through.
The flag now waves above our toil
And sheds its glory on the soil,
And boy and man looks up to it
As if to say: "I'll do my bit!"

Heroes

There are different kinds of heroes, there are
some you hear about.
They get their pictures printed, and their names
the newsboys shout;
There are heroes known to glory that were not
afraid to die
In the service of their country and to keep the
flag on high;
There are brave men in the trenches, there are
brave men on the sea,
But the silent, quiet heroes also prove their
bravery.

I am thinking of a hero that was never known
to fame,
Just a manly little fellow with a very common
name;
He was freckle-faced and ruddy, but his head
was nobly shaped,
And he one day took the whipping that his com-
rades all escaped.
And he never made a murmur, never whimpered
in reply;
He would rather take the censure than to stand
and tell a lie.

And I'm thinking of another that had courage
that was fine,
And I've often wished in moments that such
strength of will were mine.
He stood against his comrades, and he left them
then and there
When they wanted him to join them in a deed
that wasn't fair.
He stood alone, undaunted, with his little head
erect;
He would rather take the jeering than to lose
his self-respect.

And I know a lot of others that have grown
to manhood now,
Who have yet to wear the laurel that adorns the
victor's brow.
They have plodded on in honor through the dusty,
dreary ways,
They have hungered for life's comforts and the
joys of easy days,
But they've chosen to be toilers, and in this their
splendor's told:
They would rather never have it than to do some
things for gold.

The Mother's Question

When I was a boy, and it chanced to rain,
  Mother would always watch for me;
She used to stand by the window pane,
  Worried and troubled as she could be.
And this was the question I used to hear,
The very minute that I drew near;
The words she used, I can't forget:
"Tell me, my boy, if your feet are wet."

Worried about me was mother dear,
  As healthy a lad as ever strolled
Over a turnpike, far or near,
  'Fraid to death that I'd take a cold.
Always stood by the window pane,
Watching for me in the pouring rain;
And her words in my ears are ringing yet:
"Tell me, my boy, if your feet are wet."

Stockings warmed by the kitchen fire,
  And slippers ready for me to wear;
Seemed that mother would never tire,
  Giving her boy the best of care,
Thinking of him the long day through,
In the worried way that all mothers do;
Whenever it rained she'd start to fret,
Always fearing my feet were wet.

And now, whenever it rains, I see
A vision of mother in days of yore,
Still waiting there to welcome me,
As she used to do by the open door.
And always I think as I enter there
Of a mother's love and a mother's care;
Her words in my ears are ringing yet:
"Tell me, my boy, if your feet are wet."

The Blue Flannel Shirt

I am eager once more to feel easy,
I'm weary of thinking of dress;
I'm heartily sick of stiff collars,
And trousers the tailor must press.
I'm eagerly waiting the glad days—
When fashion will cease to assert
What I must put on every morning —
The days of the blue flannel shirt.

I want to get out in the country
And rest by the side of the lake;
To go a few days without shaving,
And give grim old custom the shake.
A week's growth of whiskers, I'm thinking,
At present my chin wouldn't hurt;

And I'm yearning to don those old trousers
And loaf in that blue flannel shirt.

You can brag all you like of your fashions,
The style of your cutaway coat;
You can boast of your tailor-made raiment,
And the collar that strangles your throat;
But give me the old pair of trousers
That seem to improve with the dirt,
And let me get back to the comfort
That's born of a blue flannel shirt.

Grandpa

My grandpa is the finest man
Excep' my pa. My grandpa can
Make kites an' carts an' lots of things
You pull along the ground with strings,
And he knows all the names of birds,
And how they call 'thout using words,
And where they live and what they eat,
And how they build their nests so neat.
He's lots of fun! Sometimes all day
He comes to visit me and play.
You see he's getting old, and so
To work he doesn't have to go,
And when it isn't raining, he
Drops in to have some fun with me.

He takes my hand and we go out
And everything we talk about.
He tells me how God makes the trees,
And why it hurts to pick up bees.
Sometimes he stops and shows to me
The place where fairies used to be;
And then he tells me stories, too,
And I am sorry when he's through.
When I am asking him for more
He says: "Why there's a candy store!
Let's us go there and see if they
Have got the kind we like to-day."
Then when we get back home my ma
Says: "You are spoiling Buddy, Pa."

My grandpa is my mother's pa,
I guess that's what all grandpas are.
And sometimes ma, all smiles, will say:
"You didn't always act that way.
When I was little, then you said
That children should be sent to bed
And not allowed to rule the place
And lead old folks a merry chase."
And grandpa laughs and says: "That's true,
That's what I used to say to you.
It is a father's place to show
The young the way that they should go,
But grandpas have a different task,
Which is to get them all they ask."

When I get big and old and gray
I'm going to spend my time in play;
I'm going to be a grandpa, too,
And do as all the grandpas do.
I'll buy my daughter's children things
Like horns and drums and tops with strings,
And tell them all about the trees
And frogs and fish and birds and bees
And fairies in the shady glen
And tales of giants, too, and when
They beg of me for just one more,
I'll take them to the candy store;
I'll buy them everything they see
The way my grandpa does for me

Pa Did It

The train of cars that Santa brought is out of kilter now;
While pa was showing how they went he broke the spring somehow.
They used to run around a track—at least they did when he
Would let me take them in my hands an' wind 'em with a key.

I could 'a' had some fun with 'em, if only they would go,
But, gee! I never had a chance, for pa enjoyed 'em so.

The automobile that I got that ran around the floor
Was lots of fun when it was new, but it won't go no more.
Pa wound it up for Uncle Jim to show him how it went,
And when those two got through with it the runnin' gear was bent,
An' now it doesn't go at all. I mustn't grumble though,
'Cause while it was in shape to run my pa enjoyed it so.

I've got my blocks as good as new, my mitts are perfect yet;
Although the snow is on the ground I haven't got 'em wet.
I've taken care of everything that Santa brought to me,
Except the toys that run about when wound up with a key.
But next year you can bet I won't make any such mistake;
I'm going to ask for toys an' things that my pa cannot break.

The Real Successes

You think that the failures are many,
You think the successes are few,
But you judge by the rule of the penny,
And not by the good that men do.
You judge men by standards of treasure
That merely obtain upon earth,
When the brother you're snubbing may measure
Full-length to God's standard of worth.

The failures are not in the ditches,
The failures are not in the ranks,
They have missed the acquirement of riches,
Their fortunes are not in the banks.
Their virtues are never paraded,
Their worth is not always in view,
But they're fighting their battles unaided,
And fighting them honestly, too.

There are failures to-day in high places
The failures aren't all in the low;
There are rich men with scorn in their faces
Whose homes are but castles of woe.
The homes that are happy are many,
And numberless fathers are true;
And this is the standard, if any,
By which we must judge what men do.

Wherever loved ones are awaiting
The toiler to kiss and caress,
Though in Bradstreet's he hasn't a rating,
He still is a splendid success.
If the dear ones who gather about him
And know what he's striving to do
Have never a reason to doubt him,
Is he less successful than you?

You think that the failures are many,
You judge by men's profits in gold;
You judge by the rule of the penny—
In this true success isn't told.
This falsely man's story is telling,
For wealth often brings on distress,
But wherever love brightens a dwelling,
There lives, rich or poor, a success.

The Sorry Hostess

She said she was sorry the weather was bad
The night that she asked us to dine;
And she really appeared inexpressibly sad
Because she had hoped 'twould be fine.
She was sorry to hear that my wife had a cold,
And she almost shed tears over that,
And how sorry she was, she most feelingly told,
That the steam wasn't on in the flat.

She was sorry she hadn't asked others to come,
She might just as well have had eight;
She said she was downcast and terribly glum
Because her dear husband was late.
She apologized then for the home she was in,
For the state of the rugs and the chairs,
For the children who made such a horrible din,
And then for the squeak in the stairs.

When the dinner began she apologized twice
For the olives, because they were small;
She was certain the celery, too, wasn't nice,
And the soup didn't suit her at all.
She was sorry she couldn't get whitefish instead
Of the trout that the fishmonger sent,
But she hoped that we'd manage somehow to be
fed,
Though her dinner was not what she meant.

She spoke her regrets for the salad, and then
Explained she was really much hurt,
And begged both our pardons again and again
For serving a skimpy dessert.
She was sorry for this and sorry for that,
Though there really was nothing to blame.
But I thought to myself as I put on my hat,
Perhaps she is sorry we came.

Yesterday

I've trod the links with many a man,
  And played him club for club;
'Tis scarce a year since I began
  And I am still a dub.
But this I've noticed as we strayed
  Along the bunkered way,
No one with me has ever played
  As he did yesterday.

It makes no difference what the drive,
  Together as we walk,
Till we up to the ball arrive,
  I get the same old talk:
"To-day there's something wrong with me,
  Just what I cannot say.

Would you believe I got a three
For this hole—yesterday?"

I see them top and slice a shot,
And fail to follow through,
And with their brassies plough the lot,
The very way I do.
To six and seven their figures run,
And then they sadly say:
"I neither dubbed nor foozled one
When I played—yesterday."

I have no yesterdays to count,
No good work to recall;
Each morning sees hope proudly mount,
Each evening sees it fall.
And in the locker room at night,
When men discuss their play,
I hear them and I wish I might
Have seen them—yesterday.

Oh, dear old yesterday! What store
Of joys for men you hold!
I'm sure there is no day that's more
Remembered or extolled.
I'm off my task myself a bit,
My mind has run astray;
I think, perhaps, I should have writ
These verses—yesterday.

Here she walked and romped about,
And here beneath this apple tree
Where all the grass is trampled out
The swing she loved so used to be.
This path is but a path to you,
Because my child you never knew.

'Twas here she used to stoop to smell
The first bright daffodil of spring;
'Twas here she often tripped and fell
And here she heard the robins sing.
You'd call this but a common place,
But you have never seen her face.

And it was here we used to meet.
How beautiful a spot is this,
To which she gayly raced to greet
Her daddy with his evening kiss!
You see here nothing grand or fine,
But, Oh, what memories are mine!

The people pass from day to day
And never turn their heads to see
The many charms along the way
That mean so very much to me.
For all things here are speaking of
The babe that once was mine to love.

The Little Old Man

The little old man with the curve in his back
And the eyes that are dim and the skin that is slack,
So slack that it wrinkles and rolls on his cheeks,
With a thin little voice that goes "crack!" when he speaks,
Never goes to the store but that right at his feet
Are all of the youngsters who live on the street.

And the little old man in the suit that was black,
And once might have perfectly fitted his back,
Has a boy's chubby fist in his own wrinkled hand,
And together they trudge off to Light-Hearted Land;
Some splendid excursions he gives every day
To the boys and the girls in his funny old way.

The little old man is as queer as can be;
He'd spend all his time with a child on his knee;
And the stories he tells I could never repeat,
But they're always of good boys and little girls sweet;
And the children come home at the end of the day
To tell what the little old man had to say.

Once the little old man didn't trudge to the store,
And the tap of his cane wasn't heard any more;
The children looked eagerly for him each day

And wondered why he didn't come out to play
Till some of them saw Doctor Brown ring his bell,
And they wept when they heard that he might
not get well.

But after awhile he got out with his cane,
And called all the children around him again;
And I think as I see him go trudging along
In the center, once more, of his light-hearted
throng,
That earth has no glory that's greater than this:
The little old man whom the children would miss.

The Little Velvet Suit

Last night I got to thinkin' of the pleasant long
ago,
When I still had on knee breeches, an' I wore a
flowing bow,
An' my Sunday suit was velvet. Ma an' Pa
thought it was fine,
But I know I didn't like it—either velvet or
design;
It was far too girlish for me, for I wanted some-
thing rough
Like what other boys were wearing, but Ma
wouldn't buy such stuff.

Ma answered all my protests in her sweet an' kindly way;
She said it didn't matter what I wore to run an' play,
But on Sundays when all people went to church an' wore their best,
Her boy must look as stylish an' as well kept as the rest.
So she dressed me up in velvet, an' she tied the flowing bow,
An' she straightened out my stockings, so that not a crease would show.

An' then I chuckled softly to myself while dreaming there
An' I saw her standing o'er me combing out my tangled hair.
I could feel again the tugging, an' I heard the yell I gave
When she struck a snarl, an' softly I could hear her say: "Be brave.
'Twill be over in a minute, and a little man like you
Shouldn't whimper at a little bit of pain the way you do."

Oh, I wouldn't mind the tugging at my scalp lock, and I know
That I'd gladly wear to please her that old flowing girlish bow;

And I think I'd even try to don once more that velvet suit,
And blush the same old blushes, as the women called me cute,
Could the dear old mother only take me by the hand again,
And be as proud of me right now as she was always then.

The First Steps

Last night I held my arms to you
And you held yours to mine
And started out to march to me
As any soldier fine.
You lifted up your little feet
And laughingly advanced;
And I stood there and gazed upon
Your first wee steps, entranced.

You gooed and gurgled as you came
Without a sign of fear;
As though you knew, your journey o'er,
I'd greet you with a cheer.
And, what is more, you seemed to know,
Although you are so small,
That I was there, with eager arms,
To save you from a fall.

Three tiny steps you took, and then,
Disaster and dismay!
Your over-confidence had led
Your little feet astray.
You did not see what we could see
Nor fear what us alarms;
You stumbled, but ere you could fall
I caught you in my arms.

You little tyke, in days to come
You'll bravely walk alone,
And you may have to wander paths
Where dangers lurk unknown.
And, Oh, I pray that then, as now,
When accidents befall
You'll still remember that I'm near
To save you from a fall.

Signs

It's "be a good boy, Willie,"
  And it's "run away and play,
For Santa Slaus is coming
  With his reindeer and his sleigh."
It's "mind what mother tells you,"
  And it's "put away your toys,
For Santa Claus is coming
  To the good girls and the boys."

Ho, Santa Claus is coming, there is Christmas in the air,
And little girls and little boys are good now everywhere.

World-wide the little fellows
Now are sweetly saying "please,"
And "thank you," and "excuse me,"
And those little pleasantries
That good children are supposed to
When there's company to hear;
And it's just as plain as can be
That the Christmas time is near.
Ho, it's just as plain as can be that old Santa's on his way,
For there are no little children that are really bad to-day.

And when evening shadows lengthen,
Every little curly head
Now is ready, aye, and willing
To be tucked away in bed;
Not one begs to stay up longer,
Not one even sheds a tear;
Ho, the goodness of the children
Is a sign that Santa's near.
It's wonderful, the goodness of the little tots to-day,
When they know that good old Santa has begun to pack his sleigh.

The Family's Homely Man

There never was a family without its homely man,
With legs a little longer than the ordinary plan,
An' a shock of hair that brush an' comb can't ever straighten out,
An' hands that somehow never seem to know what they're about;
The one with freckled features and a nose that looks as though
It was fashioned by the youngsters from a chunk of mother's dough.
You know the man I'm thinking of, the homely one an' plain,
That fairly oozes kindness like a rosebush dripping rain.
His face is never much to see, but back of it there lies
A heap of love and tenderness and judgment, sound and wise.

And so I sing the homely man that's sittin' in his chair,
And pray that every family will always have him there.
For looks don't count for much on earth; it's hearts that wear the gold;
An' only that is ugly which is selfish, cruel, cold.

The family needs him, Oh, so much; more, maybe, than they know;
Folks seldom guess a man's real worth until he has to go,
But they will miss a heap of love an' tenderness the day
God beckons to their homely man, an' he must go away.

He's found in every family, it doesn't matter where
They live or be they rich or poor, the homely man is there.
You'll find him sitting quiet-like and sort of drawn apart,
As though he felt he shouldn't be where folks are fine an' smart.
He likes to hide himself away, a watcher of the fun,
An' seldom takes a leading part when any game's begun.
But when there's any task to do, like need for extra chairs,
I've noticed it's the homely man that always climbs the stairs.

And always it's the homely man that happens in to mend
The little toys the youngsters break, for he's the children's friend.

And he's the one that sits all night to watch beside
the dead,
And sends the worn-out sorrowers and broken
hearts to bed.
The family wouldn't be complete without him
night or day,
To smooth the little troubles out and drive the
cares away.

When Mother Cooked with Wood

I do not quarrel with the gas,
Our modern range is fine,
The ancient stove was doomed to pass
From Time's grim firing line,
Yet now and then there comes to me
The thought of dinners good
And pies and cake that used to be
When mother cooked with wood.

The axe has vanished from the yard,
The chopping block is gone,
There is no pile of cordwood hard
For boys to work upon;
There is no box that must be filled
Each morning to the hood;
Time in its ruthlessness has willed
The passing of the wood.

And yet those days were fragrant days
And spicy days and rare;
The kitchen knew a cheerful blaze
And friendliness was there.
And every appetite was keen
For breakfasts that were good
When I had scarcely turned thirteen
And mother cooked with wood.

I used to dread my daily chore,
I used to think it tough
When mother at the kitchen door
Said I'd not chopped enough.
And on her baking days I know,
I shirked whene'er I could
In that now happy long ago
When mother cooked w th wood.

I never thought I'd wish to see
That pile of wood again;
Back then it only seemed to me
A source of care and pain.
But now I'd gladly give my all
To stand where once I stood,
If those rare days I could recall
When mother cooked with wood.

Midnight in the Pantry

You can boast your round of pleasures, praise
the sound of popping corks,
Where the orchestra is playing to the rattle of
the forks;
And your after-opera dinner you may think
superbly fine,
But that can't compare, I'm certain, to the joy
that's always mine
When I reach my little dwelling—source of all
sincere delight—
And I prowl around the pantry in the waning
hours of night.

When my business, or my pleasure, has detained
me until late,
And it's midnight, say, or after, when I reach my
own estate,
Though I'm weary with my toiling I don't hustle
up to bed,
For the inner man is hungry and he's anxious to
be fed;
Then I feel a thrill of glory from my head down
to my feet
As I prowl around the pantry after something
good to eat.

Oft I hear a call above me: "Goodness gracious,
come to bed!"
And I know that I've disturbed her by my over-
eager tread,
But I've found a glass of jelly and some bread
and butter, too,
And a bit of cold fried chicken and I answer:
"When I'm through!"
Oh, there's no cafe that better serves my precious
appetite
Than the pantry in our kitchen when I get home
late at night.

You may boast your shining silver, and the linen
and the flowers,
And the music and the laughter and the lights
that hang in showers;
You may have your cafe table with its brilliant
array,
But it doesn't charm yours truly when I'm on my
homeward way;
For a greater joy awaits me, as I hunger for a
bite—
Just the joy of pantry-prowling in the middle of
the night.

The World Is Against Me

"The world is against me," he said with a sigh
"Somebody stops every scheme that I try.
The world has me down and it's keeping me there;
I don't get a chance. Oh, the world is unfair!
When a fellow is poor then he can't get a show;
The world is determined to keep him down low."

"What of Abe Lincoln?" I asked. "Would you
say
That he was much richer than you are to-day?
He hadn't your chance of making his mark,
And his outlook was often exceedingly dark;
Yet he clung to his purpose with courage most
grim
And he got to the top. Was the world against
him?"

"What of Ben Franklin? I've oft heard it said
That many a time he went hungry to bed.
He started with nothing but courage to climb,
But patiently struggled and waited his time.
He dangled awhile from real poverty's limb,
Yet he got to the top. Was the world against him?

"I could name you a dozen, yes, hundreds, I guess,
Of poor boys who've patiently climbed to success;
All boys who were down and who struggled alone,

Who'd have thought themselves rich if your fortune they'd known;
Yet they rose in the world you're so quick to condemn,
And I'm asking you now, was the world against them?"

Bribed

I know that what I did was wrong;
I should have sent you far away.
You tempted me, and I'm not strong;
I tried but couldn't answer nay.
I should have packed you off to bed;
Instead I let you stay awhile,
And mother scolded when I said
That you had bribed me with your smile.

And yesterday I gave to you
Another piece of chocolate cake,
Some red-ripe watermelon, too,
And that gave you the stomach ache.
And that was after I'd been told
You'd had enough, you saucy miss;
You tempted me, you five-year-old,
And bribed me with a hug and kiss.

And mother said I mustn't get
You roller skates, yet here they are;
I haven't dared to tell her yet;
Some time, she says, I'll go too far.
I gave my word I wouldn't buy
These things, for accidents she fears;
Now I must tell, when questioned why,
Just how you bribed me with your tears.

I've tried so hard to do the right,
Yet I have broken every vow.
I let you do, most every night,
The things your mother won't allow.
I know that I am doing wrong,
Yet all my sense of honor flies,
The moment that you come along
And bribe me with those wondrous eyes.

The Home Builders

The world is filled with bustle and with selfishness
and greed,
It is filled with restless people that are dreaming
of a deed.
You can read it in their faces; they are dreaming
of the day
When they'll come to fame and fortune and put
all their cares away.

And I think as I behold them, though it's far
indeed they roam,
They will never find contentment save they seek
for it at home.

I watch them as they hurry through the surging
lines of men,
Spurred to speed by grim ambition, and I know
they're dreaming then.
They are weary, sick and footsore, but their goal
seems far away,
And it's little they've accomplished at the ending
of the day.
It is rest they're vainly seeking, love and laugh-
ter in the gloam,
But they'll never come to claim it, save they claim
it here at home.

For the peace that is the sweetest isn't born of
minted gold,
And the joy that lasts the longest and still lingers
when we're old
Is no dim and distant pleasure—it is not to-mor-
row's prize,
It is not the end of toiling, or the rainbow of our
sighs.
It is every day within us—all the rest is hippo-
drome—
And the soul that is the gladdest is the soul that
builds a home.

They are fools who build for glory! They are
fools who pin their hopes
On the come and go of battles or some vessel's
slender ropes.
They shall sicken and shall wither and shall never
peace attain
Who believe that real contentment only men vic-
torious gain.
For the only happy toilers under earth's majestic
dome
Are the ones who find their glories in the little
spot called home.

My Books and I

My books and I are good old pals:
My laughing books are gay,
Just suited for my merry moods
When I am wont to play.
Bill Nye comes down to joke with me
And, Oh, the joy he spreads.
Just like two fools we sit and laugh
And shake our merry heads.

When I am in a thoughtful mood,
With Stevenson I sit,
Who seems to know I've had enough
Of Bill Nye and his wit.

And so, more thoughtful than I am,
He talks of lofty things,
And thus an evening hour we spend
Sedate and grave as kings.

And should my soul be torn with grief
Upon my shelf I find
A little volume, torn and thumbled,
For comfort just designed.
I take my little Bible down
And read its pages o'er,
And when I part from it I find
I'm stronger than before.

Success

I hold no dream of fortune vast,
Nor seek undying fame.
I do not ask when life is past
That many know my name.

I may not own the skill to rise
To glory's topmost height,
Nor win a place among the wise,
But I can keep the right.

And I can live my life on earth
Contented to the end,
If but a few shall know my worth
And proudly call me friend.

Questions

Would you sell your boy for a stack of gold?
Would you miss that hand that is yours to hold?
Would you take a fortune and never see
The man, in a few brief years, he'll be?
Suppose that his body were racked with pain,
How much would you pay for his health again?

Is there money enough in the world to-day
To buy your boy? Could a monarch pay
You silver and gold in so large a sum
That you'd have him blinded or stricken dumb?
How much would you take, if you had the choice,
Never to hear, in this world, his voice?

How much would you take in exchange for all
The joy that is wrapped in that youngster small?
Are there diamonds enough in the mines of earth
To equal your dreams of that youngster's worth?
Would you give up the hours that he's on your knee
The richest man in the world to be?

You may prate of gold, but your fortune lies,
And you know it well, in your boy's bright eyes.
And there's nothing that money can buy or do
That means so much as that boy to you.
Well, which does the most of your time employ,
The chase for gold—or that splendid boy?

Sausage

You may brag about your breakfast foods you
eat at break of day,
Your crisp, delightful shavings and your stack of
last year's hay,
Your toasted flakes of rye and corn that fairly
swim in cream,
Or rave about a sawdust mash, an epicurean
dream.
But none of these appeals to me, though all of
them I've tried—
The breakfast that I liked the best was sausage
mother fried.

Old country sausage was its name; the kind, of
course, you know,
The little links that seemed to be almost as white
as snow,
But turned unto a ruddy brown, while sizzling in
the pan;
Oh, they were made both to appease and charm
the inner man.
All these new-fangled dishes make me blush and
turn aside,
When I think about the sausage that for break-
fast mother fried.

When they roused me from my slumbers and I
left to do the chores,

It wasn't long before I breathed a fragrance out
of doors
That seemed to grip my spirit, and to thrill my
body through,
For the spice of hunger tingled, and 'twas then I
plainly knew
That the gnawing at my stomach would be quickly
satisfied
By a plate of country sausage that my dear old
mother fried.

There upon the kitchen table, with its cloth of
turkey red,
Was a platter heaped with sausage and a plate of
home-made bread,
And a cup of coffee waiting—not a puny demi-
tasse
That can scarcely hold a mouthful, but a cup of
greater class;
And I fell to eating largely, for I could not be
denied—
Oh, I'm sure a king would relish the sausage
mother fried.

Times have changed and so have breakfasts; now
each morning when I see
A dish of shredded something or of flakes passed
up to me,
All my thoughts go back to boyhood, to the days
of long ago,

When the morning meal meant something more
than vain and idle show.
And I hunger, Oh, I hunger, in a way I cannot
hide,
For a plate of steaming sausage like the kind my
mother fried.

Friends

Ain't it fine when things are going
Topsy-turvy and askew
To discover someone showing
Good old-fashioned faith in you?

Ain't it good when life seems dreary
And your hopes about to end,
Just to feel the handclasp cheery
Of a fine old loyal friend?

Gosh! one fellow to another
Means a lot from day to day,
Seems we're living for each other
In a friendly sort of way.

When a smile or cheerful greetin'
Means so much to fellows sore,
Seems we ought to keep repeatin'
Smiles an' praises more an' more.

A Boost for Modern Methods

In some respects the old days were perhaps ahead
of these,
Before we got to wanting wealth and costly
luxuries;
Perhaps the world was happier then, I'm not the
one to say,
But when it's zero weather I am glad I live to-day.

Old-fashioned winters I recall—the winters of
my youth—
I have no great desire for them to-day, I say in
truth;
The frost upon the window panes was beautiful
to see,
But the chill upon that bedroom floor was not a
joy to me.

I do not now recall that it was fun in those days
when
I woke to learn the water pipes were frozen tight
"again."
To win once more the old-time joys, I don't
believe I'd care
To have to sleep, for comfort's sake, dressed in
my underwear.

Old-fashioned winters had their charms, a fact I
can't deny,
But after all I'm really glad that they have wan-
dered by;
We used to tumble out of bed, like firemen, I
declare,
And grab our clothes and hike down stairs and
finish dressing there.

Yes, brag about those days of old, boast of them
as you will,
I sing the modern methods that have robbed them
of their chill;
I sing the cheery steam pipe and the upstairs
snug and warm
And a spine that's free from shivers as I robe
my manly form.

The Man to Be

Some day the world will need a man of courage
in a time of doubt,
And somewhere, as a little boy, that future hero
plays about.
Within some humble home, no doubt, that instrument of greater things
Now climbs upon his father's knee or to his
mother's garments clings.
And when shall come that call for him to render
service that is fine,
He that shall do God's mission here may be your
little boy or mine.

Long years of preparation mark the pathway for
the splendid souls,
And generations live and die and seem no nearer
to their goals,
And yet the purpose of it all, the fleeting pleasure
and the woe,
The laughter and the grief of life that all who
come to earth must know
May be to pave the way for one—one man to
serve the Will Divine
And it is possible that he may be your little boy
or mine.

Some day the world will need a man! I stand
beside his cot at night
And wonder if I'm teaching him, as best I can,
to know the right.
I am the father of a boy—his life is mine to
make or mar—
And he no better can become than what my daily
teachings are;
There will be need for someone great—I dare
not falter from the line—
The man that is to serve the world may be that
little boy of mine.

Perhaps your boy and mine may not ascend the
lofty heights of fame;
The orders for their births are hid. We know
not why to earth they came.
Yet in some little bed to-night the great man of
to-morrow sleeps
And only He who sent him here, the secret of his
purpose keeps.
As fathers then our care is this—to keep in mind
the Great Design.
The man the world shall need some day may be
your little boy or mine.

The Summer Children

I like 'em in the winter when their cheeks are
slightly pale,
I like 'em in the spring time when the March
winds blow a gale;
But when summer suns have tanned 'em and
they're racing to and fro,
I somehow think the children make the finest
sort of show.

When they're brown as little berries and they're
bare of foot and head,
And they're on the go each minute where the
velvet lawns are spread,
Then their health is at its finest and they never
stop to rest,
Oh, it's then I think the children look and are
their very best.

We've got to know the winter and we've got to
know the spring,
But for children, could I do it, unto summer I
would cling;
For I'm happiest when I see 'em, as a wild and
merry band
Of healthy, lusty youngsters that the summer
sun has tanned.

October

Days are gettin' shorter an' the air a keener snap;
Apples now are droppin' into Mother Nature's lap;
The mist at dusk is risin' over valley, marsh an' fen
An' it's just as plain as sunshine, winter's comin' on again.

The turkeys now are struttin' round the old farmhouse once more;
They are done with all their nestin', and their hatchin' days are o'er;
Now the farmer's cuttin' fodder for the silo towerin' high
An' he's frettin' an' complainin' 'cause the corn's a bit too dry.

But the air is mighty peaceful an' the scene is good to see,
An' there's somethin' in October that stirs deep inside o' me;
An' I just can't help believin' in a God above us when
Everything is ripe for harvest an' the frost is back again.

On Quitting

How much grit do you think you've got?
Can you quit a thing that you like a lot?
You may talk of pluck; it's an easy word,
And where'er you go it is often heard;
But can you tell to a jot or guess
Just how much courage you now possess?

You may stand to trouble and keep your grin,
But have you tackled self-discipline?
Have you ever issued commands to you
To quit the things that you like to do,
And then, when tempted and sorely swayed,
Those rigid orders have you obeyed?

Don't boast of your grit till you've tried it out,
Nor prate to men of your courage stout,
For it's easy enough to retain a grin
In the face of a fight there's a chance to win,
But the sort of grit that is good to own
Is the stuff you need when you're all alone.

How much grit do you think you've got?
Can you turn from joys that you like a lot?
Have you ever tested yourself to know
How far with yourself your will can go?
If you want to know if you have grit,
Just pick out a joy that you like, and quit.

It's bully sport and it's open fight;
It will keep you busy both day and night;
For the toughest kind of a game you'll find
Is to make your body obey your mind.
And you never will know what is meant by grit
Unless there's something you've tried to quit.

The Price of Riches

Nobody stops at the rich man's door to pass the time of day.
Nobody shouts a "hello!" to him in the good old-fashioned way.
Nobody comes to his porch at night and sits in that extra chair
And talks till it's time to go to bed. He's all by himself up there.

Nobody just happens in to call on the long, cold winter nights.
Nobody feels that he's welcome now, though the house is ablaze with lights.
And never an unexpected guest will tap at his massive door
And stay to tea as he used to do, for his neighborly days are o'er.

It's a distant life that the rich man leads and many
an hour is glum,
For never the neighbors call on him save when
they are asked to come.
At heart he is just as he used to be and he longs
for his friends of old,
But they never will venture unbidden there.
They're afraid of his wall of gold.

For silver and gold in a large amount there's a
price that all men must pay,
And who will dwell in a rich man's house must
live in a lonely way.
For once you have builded a fortune vast you
will sigh for the friends you knew
But never they'll tap at your door again in the
way that they used to do.

The Other Fellow

Whose luck is better far than ours?
The other fellow's.
Whose road seems always lined with flowers?
The other fellow's.
Who is the man who seems to get
Most joy in life, with least regret,
Who always seems to win his bet?
The other fellow.

Who fills the place we think we'd like?
The other fellow.
Whom does good fortune always strike?
The other fellow.
Whom do we envy, day by day?
Who has more time than we to play?
Who is it, when we mourn, seems gay?
The other fellow.

Who seems to miss the thorns we find?
The other fellow.
Who seems to leave us all behind?
The other fellow.
Who never seems to feel the woe,
The anguish and the pain we know?
Who gets the best seats at the show?
The other fellow.

And yet, my friend, who envies you?
The other fellow.
Who thinks he gathers only rue?
The other fellow.
Who sighs because he thinks that he
Would infinitely happier be,
If he could be like you or me?
The other fellow.

The Open Fire

There in the flame of the open grate,
All that is good in the past I see:
Red-lipped youth on the swinging gate,
Bright-eyed youth with its minstrelsy;
Girls and boys that I used to know,
Back in the days of Long Ago,
Troop before in the smoke and flame,
Chatter and sing, as the wild birds do.
Everyone I can call by name,
For the fire builds all of my youth anew.

Outside, people go stamping by,
Squeak of wheel on the evening air,
Stars and planets race through the sky,
Here are darkness and silence rare;
Only the flames in the open grate
Crackle and flare as they burn up hate,
Malice and envy and greed for gold,
Dancing, laughing my cares away;
I've forgotten that I am old,
Once again I'm a boy at play.

There in the flame of the open grate
Bright the pictures come and go;
Lovers swing on the garden gate,
Lovers kiss 'neath the mistletoe.
I've forgotten that I am old,
I've forgotten my story's told;

Whistling boy down the lane I stroll,
All untouched by the blows of fate,
Time turns back and I'm young of soul,
Dreaming there by the open grate.

Improvement

The joy of life is living it, or so it seems to me;
In finding shackles on your wrists, then struggling
till you're free;
In seeing wrongs and righting them, in dreaming
splendid dreams,
Then toiling till the vision is as real as moving
streams.
The happiest mortal on the earth is he who ends
his day
By leaving better than he found to bloom along
the way.

Were all things perfect here there would be
naught for man to do;
If what is old were good enough we'd never need
the new.
The only happy time of rest is that which follows
strife
And sees some contribution made unto the joy of
life.

And he who has oppression felt and conquered it is he
Who really knows the happiness and peace of being free.

The miseries of earth are here and with them all must cope.
Who seeks for joy, through hedges thick of care and pain must grope.
Through disappointment man must go to value pleasure's thrill;
To really know the joy of health a man must first be ill.
The wrongs are here for man to right, and happiness is had
By striving to supplant with good the evil and the bad.

The joy of life is living it and doing things of worth,
In making bright and fruitful all the barren spots of earth.
In facing odds and mastering them and rising from defeat,
And making true what once was false, and what was bitter, sweet.
For only he knows perfect joy whose little bit of soil
Is richer ground than what it was when he began to toil.

Send Her a Valentine

Send her a valentine to say
You love her in the same old way.
Just drop the long familiar ways
And live again the old-time days
When love was new and youth was bright
And all was laughter and delight,
And treat her as you would if she
Were still the girl that used to be.

Pretend that all the years have passed
Without one cold and wintry blast;
That you are coming still to woo
Your sweetheart as you used to do;
Forget that you have walked along
The paths of life where right and wrong
And joy and grief in battle are,
And play the heart without a scar.

Be what you were when youth was fine
And send to her a valentine;
Forget the burdens and the woe
That have been given you to know
And to the wife, so fond and true,
The pledges of the past renew.
'Twill cure her life of every ill
To find that you're her sweetheart still.

Bud

Who is it lives to the full every minute,
Gets all the joy and the fun that is in it?
Tough as they make 'em, and ready to race,
Fit for a battle and fit for a chase,
Heedless of buttons on blouses and pants,
Laughing at danger and taking a chance,
Gladdest, it seems, when he wallows in mud,
Who is the rascal? I'll tell you, it's Bud!

Who is it wakes with a shout of delight,
And comes to our room with a smile that is bright?
Who is it springs into bed with a leap
And thinks it is queer that his dad wants to sleep?
Who answers his growling with laughter and tries
His patience by lifting the lids of his eyes?
Who jumps in the air and then lands with a thud
On his poor daddy's stomach? I'll tell you, it's Bud!

Who is it thinks life is but laughter and play
And doesn't know care is a part of the day?
Who is reckless of stockings and heedless of shoes?
Who laughs at a tumble and grins at a bruise?
Who climbs over fences and clambers up trees,
And scrapes all the skin off his shins and his knees?

Who sometimes comes home all bespattered with blood
That was drawn by a fall? It's that rascal called Bud.

Yet, who is it makes all our toiling worth while?
Who can cure every ache that we know, by his smile?
Who is prince to his mother and king to his dad
And makes us forget that we ever were sad?
Who is center of all that we dream of and plan,
Our baby to-day but to-morrow our man?
It's that tough little, rough little tyke in the mud,
That tousled-haired, fun-loving rascal called Bud!

The Front Seat

When I was but a little lad I always liked to ride,
No matter what the rig we had, right by the driver's side.
The front seat was the honor place in bob-sleigh, coach or hack,
And I maneuvered to avoid the cushions in the back.
We children used to scramble then to share the driver's seat,
And long the pout I wore when I was not allowed that treat.

Though times have changed and I am old I still confess I race
With other grown-ups now and then to get my favorite place.

The auto with its cushions fine and big and easy springs
Has altered in our daily lives innumerable things,
But hearts of men are still the same as what they used to be,
When surreys were the stylish rigs, or so they seem to me,
For every grown-up girl to-day and every grown-up boy
Still hungers for the seat in front and scrambles for its joy,
And riding by the driver's side still holds the charm it did
In those glad, youthful days gone by when I was just a kid.

I hurry, as I used to do, to claim that favorite place,
And when a tonneau seat is mine I wear a solemn face.
I try to hide the pout I feel, and do my best to smile,

But envy of the man in front gnaws at me all the while.
I want to be where I can see the road that lies ahead,
To watch the trees go flying by and see the country spread
Before me as we spin along, for there I miss the fear
That seems to grip the soul of me while riding in the rear.

And I am not alone in this. To-day I drive a car
And three glad youngsters madly strive to share the "seat with Pa."
And older folks that ride with us, I very plainly see,
Maneuver in their artful ways to sit in front with me;
Though all the cushions in the world were piled up in the rear,
The child in all of us still longs to watch the engineer.
And happier hearts we seem to own when we're allowed to ride,
No matter what the car may be, close by the driver's side.

There Are No Gods

There are no gods that bring to youth
  The rich rewards that stalwarts claim;
The god of fortune is in truth
  A vision and an empty name.
The toiler who through doubt and care
  Unto his goal and victory plods,
With no one need his glory share:
  He is himself his favoring gods.

There are no gods that will bestow
  Earth's joys and blessings on a man.
Each one must choose the path he'll go,
  Then win from it what joy he can.
And he that battles with the odds
  Shall know success, but he who waits
The favors of the mystic gods,
  Shall never come to glory's gates.

No man is greater than his will;
  No gods to him will lend a hand!
Upon his courage and his skill
  The record of his life must stand.
What honors shall befall to him,
  What he shall claim of fame or pelf,
Depend not on the favoring whim
  Of fortune's god, but on himself.

The Auto

An auto is a helpful thing;
I love the way the motor hums,
I love each cushion and each spring,
The way it goes, the way it comes;
It saves me many a dreary mile,
It brings me quickly to the smile
Of those at home, and every day
It adds unto my time for play.

It keeps me with my friends in touch;
No journey now appears too much
To make with meetings at the end:
It gives me time to be a friend.
It laughs at distance, and has power
To lengthen every fleeting hour.
It bears me into country new
That otherwise I'd never view.

It's swift and sturdy and it strives
To fill with happiness our lives;
When for the doctor we've a need
It brings him to our door with speed.
It saves us hours of anxious care
And heavy heartache and despair.
It has its faults, but still I sing:
The auto is a helpful thing.

The Handy Man

The handy man about the house
Is old and bent and gray;
Each morning in the yard he toils,
Where all the children play;
Some new task every day he finds,
Some task he loves to do,
The handy man about the house,
Whose work is never through.

The children stand to see him toil,
And watch him mend a chair;
They bring their broken toys to him;
He keeps them in repair.
No idle moment Grandpa spends,
But finds some work to do,
And hums a snatch of some old song,
That in his youth he knew.

He builds with wood most wondrous things:
A table for the den,
A music rack to please the girls,
A gun case for the men.
And 'midst his paints and tools he smiles,
And seems as young and gay
As any of the little ones
Who round him run in play.

I stopped to speak with him awhile;
"Oh, tell me, Grandpa, pray,"
I said, "why do you work so hard
Throughout the livelong day?
Your hair is gray, your back is bent,
With weight of years oppressed;
This is the evening of your life—
Why don't you sit and rest?"

"Ah, no," the old man answered me,
"Although I'm old and gray,
I like to work out here where I
Can watch the children play.
The old have tasks that they must do;
The greatest of my joys
Is working on this shaded porch,
And mending children's toys."

And as I wandered on, I thought,
Oh, shall I lonely be
When time has powdered white my hair,
And left his mark on me?
Will little children round me play,
Shall I have work to do?
Or shall I be, when age is mine,
Lonely and useless too?

The New Days

The old days, the old days, how oft the poets sing,
The days of hope at dewy morn, the days of early spring,
The days when every mead was fair, and every heart was true,
And every maiden wore a smile, and every sky was blue;
The days when dreams were golden and every night brought rest,
The old, old days of youth and love, the days they say were best;
But I—I sing the new days, the days that lie before,
The days of hope and fancy, the days that I adore.

The new days, the new days, the selfsame days they are;
The selfsame sunshine heralds them, the selfsame evening star
Shines out to light them on their way unto the Bygone Land,
And with the selfsame arch of blue the world to-day is spanned.
The new days, the new days, when friends are just as true,

And maidens smile upon us all, the way they used to do,
Dreams we know are golden dreams, hope springs in every breast;
It cheers us in the dewy morn and soothes us when we rest.

The new days, the new days, of them I want to sing,
The new days with the fancies and the golden dreams they bring;
The old days had their pleasures, but likewise have the new
The gardens with their roses and the meadows bright with dew;
We love to-day the selfsame way they loved in days of old;
The world is bathed in beauty and it isn't growing cold;
There's joy for us a-plenty, there are tasks for us to do,
And life is worth the living, for the friends we know are true.

The Call

Joy stands on the hilltops,
  Beckoning to me,
Urging me to journey
  Up where I can see
Blue skies ever smiling,
  Cool green fields below,
Hear the songs of children
  Still untouched by woe.

Joy stands on the hilltops,
  Urging me to stay,
Spite of toil and trouble,
  To life's rugged way,
Holding out a promise
  Of a life serene
When the steeps I've mastered
  Lying now between.

Joy stands on the hilltops,
  Smiling down at me,
Urging me to clamber
  Up where I can see
Over toil and trouble
  Far beyond despair,
And I answer smiling:
  Some day I'll be there.

Songs of Rejoicing

Songs of rejoicin',
  Of love and of cheer,
Are the songs that I'm yearnin' for
  Year after year.
The songs about children
  Who laugh in their glee
Are the songs worth the singin',
  The bright songs for me.

Songs of rejoicin',
  Of kisses and love,
Of faith in the Father,
  Who sends from above
The sunbeams to scatter
  The gloom and the fear;
These songs worth the singin',
  The songs of good cheer.

Songs of rejoicin',
  Oh, sing them again,
The brave songs of courage
  Appealing to men.
Of hope in the future
  Of heaven the goal;
The songs of rejoicin'
  That strengthen the soul.

Another Mouth to Feed

We've got another mouth to feed,
From out our little store;
To satisfy another's need
Is now my daily chore.
A growing family is ours,
Beyond the slightest doubt;
It takes all my financial powers
To keep them looking stout.
With us another makes his bow
To breakfast, dine and sup;
Our little circle's larger now,
For Buddy's got a pup.

If I am frayed about the heels
And both my elbows shine
And if my overcoat reveals
The poverty that's mine,
'Tis not because I squander gold
In folly's reckless way;
The cost of foodstuffs, be it told,
Takes all my weekly pay.
'Tis putting food on empty plates
That eats my wages up;
And now another mouth awaits,
For Buddy's got a pup.

And yet I gladly stand the strain,
And count the task worth while,

Nor will I dismally complain
While Buddy wears a smile.
What's one mouth more at any board
Though costly be the fare?
The poorest of us can afford
His frugal meal to share.
And so bring on the extra plate,
He will not need a cup,
And gladly will I pay the freight
Now Buddy's got a pup.

The Little Church

The little church of Long Ago, where as a boy I sat
With mother in the family pew, and fumbled with my hat—
How I would like to see it now the way I saw it then,
The straight-backed pews, the pulpit high, the women and the men
Dressed stiffly in their Sunday clothes and solemnly devout,
Who closed their eyes when prayers were said and never looked about—
That little church of Long Ago, it wasn't grand to see,
But even as a little boy it meant a lot to me.

The choir loft where father sang comes back to me again;
I hear his tenor voice once more the way I heard it when
The deacons used to pass the plate, and once again I see
The people fumbling for their coins, as glad as they could be
To drop their quarters on the plate, and I'm a boy once more
With my two pennies in my fist that mother gave before
We left the house, and once again I'm reaching out to try
To drop them on the plate before the deacon passes by.

It seems to me I'm sitting in that high-backed pew, the while
The minister is preaching in that good old-fashioned style;
And though I couldn't understand it all somehow I know
The Bible was the text book in that church of Long Ago;
He didn't preach on politics, but used the word of God,
And even now I seem to see the people gravely nod,

As though agreeing thoroughly with all he had
to say,
And then I see them thanking him before they
go away.

The little church of Long Ago was not a struc-
ture huge,
It had no hired singers or no other subterfuge
To get the people to attend, 'twas just a simple
place
Where every Sunday we were told about God's
saving grace;
No men of wealth were gathered there to help
it with a gift;
The only worldly thing it had—a mortgage hard
to lift.
And somehow, dreaming here to-day, I wish
that I could know
The joy of once more sitting in that church of
Long Ago.

Sue's Got a Baby

Sue's got a baby now, an' she
Is like her mother used to be;
Her face seems prettier, an' her ways
More settled-like. In these few days
She's changed completely, an' her smile
Has taken on the mother-style.
Her voice is sweeter, an' her words
Are clear as is the song of birds.
She still is Sue, but not the same—
She's different since the baby came.

There is a calm upon her face
That marks the change that's taken place;
It seems as though her eyes now see
The wonder things that are to be,
An' that her gentle hands now own
A gentleness before unknown.
Her laughter has a clearer ring
Than all the bubbling of a spring,
An' in her cheeks love's tender flame
Glows brighter since the baby came.

I look at her an' I can see
Her mother as she used to be.
How sweet she was, an' yet how much
She sweetened by the magic touch

That made her mother! In her face
It seemed the angels left a trace
Of Heavenly beauty to remain
Where once had been the lines of pain
An' with the baby in her arms
Enriched her with a thousand charms.

Sue's got a baby now an' she
Is prettier than she used to be
A wondrous change has taken place,
A softer beauty marks her face
An' in the warmth of her caress
There seems the touch of holiness,
An' all the charms her mother knew
Have blossomed once again in Sue.
I sit an' watch her an' I claim
My lost joys since her baby came.

The Lure That Failed

I know a wonderful land, I said,
Where the skies are always blue,
Where on chocolate drops are the children fed,
And cocoanut cookies, too;
Where puppy dogs romp at the children's feet,
And the liveliest kittens play,
And little tin soldiers guard the street
To frighten the bears away.

This land is reached by a wonderful ship
That sails on a golden tide;
But never a grown-up makes the trip—
It is only a children's ride.
And never a cross-patch journeys there,
And never a pouting face,
For it is the Land of Smiling, where
A frown is a big disgrace.

Oh, you board the ship when the sun goes down,
And over a gentle sea
You slip away from the noisy town
To the land of the chocolate tree.
And there, till the sun comes over the hill,
You frolic and romp and play,
And of candy and cake you eat your fill,
With no one to tell you "Nay!"

So come! It is time for the ship to go
To this wonderful land so fair,
And gently the summer breezes blow
To carry you safely there.
So come! Set sail on this golden sea,
To the land that is free from dread!
"I know what you mean," she said to me,
"An' I don't wanna go to bed."

The Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving

It may be I am getting old and like too much to dwell
Upon the days of bygone years, the days I loved so well;
But thinking of them now I wish somehow that I could know
A simple old Thanksgiving Day, like those of long ago,
When all the family gathered round a table richly spread,
With little Jamie at the foot and grandpa at the head,
The youngest of us all to greet the oldest with a smile,
With mother running in and out and laughing all the while.

It may be I'm old-fashioned, but it seems to me
to-day
We're too much bent on having fun to take the
time to pray;
Each little family grows up with fashions of its
own;
It lives within a world itself and wants to be
alone.
It has its special pleasures, its circle, too, of
friends;
There are no get-together days; each one his jour-
ney wends,
Pursuing what he likes the best in his particular
way,
Letting the others do the same upon Thanksgiving
Day.

I like the olden way the best, when relatives were
glad
To meet the way they used to do when I was but
a lad;
The old home was a rendezvous for all our kith
and kin,
And whether living far or near they all came
trooping in
With shouts of "Hello, daddy!" as they fairly
stormed the place

And made a rush for mother, who would stop to wipe her face
Upon her gingham apron before she kissed them all,
Hugging them proudly to her breast, the grown-ups and the small.

Then laughter rang throughout the home, and, Oh, the jokes they told;
From Boston, Frank brought new ones, but father sprang the old;
All afternoon we chatted, telling what we hoped to do,
The struggles we were making and the hardships we'd gone through;
We gathered round the fireside. How fast the hours would fly—
It seemed before we'd settled down 'twas time to say good-bye.
Those were the glad Thanksgivings, the old-time families knew
When relatives could still be friends and every heart was true.

The Old-Fashioned Pair

'Tis a little old house with a squeak in the stairs,
And a porch that seems made for just two easy chairs;
In the yard is a group of geraniums red,
And a glorious old-fashioned peony bed.
Petunias and pansies and larkspurs are there
Proclaiming their love for the old-fashioned pair.

Oh, it's hard now to picture the peace of the place!
Never lovelier smile lit a fair woman's face
Than the smile of the little old lady who sits
On the porch through the bright days of summer and knits.
And a courtlier manner no prince ever had
Than the little old man that she speaks of as "dad."

In that little old house there is nothing of hate;
There are old-fashioned things by an old-fashioned grate;
On the walls there are pictures of fine looking men
And beautiful ladies to look at, and then
Time has placed on the mantel to comfort them there
The pictures of grandchildren, radiantly fair.

Every part of the house seems to whisper of joy,
Save the trinkets that speak of a lost little boy.
Yet Time has long since soothed the hurt and
the pain,
And his glorious memories only remain:
The laughter of children the old walls have
known,
And the joy of it stays, though the babies have
flown.

I am fond of that house and that old-fashioned
pair
And the glorious calm that is hovering there.
The riches of life are not silver and gold
But fine sons and daughters when we are grown
old,
And I pray when the years shall have silvered
our hair
We shall know the delights of that old-fashioned
pair.

At Pelletier's

We've been out to Pelletier's
Brushing off the stain of years,
Quitting all the moods of men
And been boys and girls again.
We have romped through orchards blazing,
Petted ponies gently grazing,
Hidden in the hayloft's spaces,
And the queerest sort of places
That are lost (and it's a pity!)
To the youngsters in the city.
And the hired men have let us
Drive their teams, and stopped to get us
Apples from the trees, and lingered
While a cow's cool nose we fingered;
And they told us all about her
And her grandpa who was stouter.

We've been out to Pelletier's
Watching horses raise their ears,
And their joyous whinnies hearing
When the man with oats was nearing.
We've been climbing trees an' fences
Never minding consequences.
And we helped the man to curry
The fat ponies' sides so furry.
And we saw a squirrel taking
Walnuts to the nest he's making,

Storing them for winter, when he
Can't get out to hunt for any.
And we watched the turkeys, growing
Big and fat and never knowing
That the reason they were living
Is to die for our Thanksgiving.

We've been out to Pelletier's,
Brushing off the stain of years.
We were kids set free from shamming
And the city's awful cramming,
And the clamor and the bustle
And the fearful rush and hustle—
Out of doors with room to race in
And broad acres soft to chase in.
We just stretched our souls and let them
Drop the petty cares that fret them,
Left our narrow thoughts behind us,
Loosed the selfish traits that bind us
And were wholesomer and plainer
Simpler, kinder folks and saner,
And at night said: "It's a pity
Mortals ever built a city."

At Christmas

A man is at his finest towards the finish of the year;
He is almost what he should be when the Christmas season's here;
Then he's thinking more of others than he's thought the months before,
And the laughter of his children is a joy worth toiling for.
He is less a selfish creature than at any other time;
When the Christmas spirit rules him he comes close to the sublime.

When it's Christmas man is bigger and is better in his part;
He is keener for the service that is prompted by the heart.
All the petty thoughts and narrow seem to vanish for awhile
And the true reward he's seeking is the glory of a smile.
Then for others he is toiling and somehow it seems to me
That at Christmas he is almost what God wanted him to be.

If I had to paint a picture of a man I think I'd wait
Till he'd fought his selfish battles and had put aside his hate.
I'd not catch him at his labors when his thoughts are all of pelf,
On the long days and the dreary when he's striving for himself.
I'd not take him when he's sneering, when he's scornful or depressed,
But I'd look for him at Christmas when he's shining at his best.

Man is ever in a struggle and he's oft misunderstood;
There are days the worst that's in him is the master of the good,
But at Christmas kindness rules him and he puts himself aside
And his petty hates are vanquished and his heart is opened wide.
Oh, I don't know how to say it, but somehow it seems to me
That at Christmas man is almost what God sent him here to be.

The Little Army

Little women, little men,
Childhood never comes again.
Live it gayly while you may;
Give your baby souls to play;
  March to sound of stick and pan,
    In your paper hats, and tramp
  Just as bravely as you can
    To your pleasant little camp.
Wooden sword and wooden gun
Make a battle splendid fun.
Fine the victories you win:
Dimpled cheek and dimpled chin.

Little women, little men,
Hearts are light when years are ten;
Eyes are bright and cheeks are red
When life's cares lie all ahead.
  Drums make merry music when
    They are leading children out;
  Trumpet calls are cheerful then,
    Glorious is the battle shout.
Little soldiers, single file,
Uniformed in grin and smile,
Conquer every foe they meet
Up and down the gentle street.

Little women, little men,
Would that youth could come again!
Would that I might fall in line
As a little boy of nine,
  But with broomstick for a gun,
    And with paper hat that I
  Bravely wore back there for fun,
    Never more may I defy
Foes that deep in ambush kneel—
Now my warfare's grim and real.
I that once was brave and bold,
Now am battered, bruised and old.

Little women, little men,
Planning to attack my den,
Little do you know the joy
That you give a worn-out boy
  As he hears your gentle feet
    Pitter-patting in the hall;
  Gladly does he wait to meet
    Conquest by a troop so small.
Dimpled cheek and dimpled chin,
You have but to smile to win.
Come and take him where he stays
Dreaming of his by-gone days.

"I work for someone else," he said;
"I have no chance to get ahead.
At night I leave the job behind;
At morn I face the same old grind.
And everything I do by day
Just brings to me the same old pay.
While I am here I cannot see
The semblance of a chance for me."

I asked another how he viewed
The occupation he pursued.
"It's dull and dreary toil," said he,
"And brings but small reward to me.
My boss gets all the profits fine
That I believe are rightly mine.
My life's monotonously grim
Because I'm forced to work for him."

I stopped a third young man to ask
His attitude towards his task.
A cheerful smile lit up his face;
"I shan't be always in this place,"
He said, "because some distant day
A better job will come my way."
"Your boss?" I asked, and answered he:
"I'm going to make him notice me.

"He pays me wages and in turn
That money I am here to earn,
But I don't work for him alone;
Allegiance to myself I own.
I do not do my best because
It gets me favors or applause—
I work for him, but I can see
That actually I work for me.

"It looks like business good to me
The best clerk on the staff to be.
If customers approve my style
And like my manner and my smile
I help the firm to get the pelf,
But what is more I help myself.
From one big thought I'm never free:
That every day I work for me."

Oh, youth, thought I, you're bound to climb
The ladder of success in time.
Too many self-impose the cross
Of daily working for a boss,
Forgetting that in failing him
It is their own stars that they dim.
And when real service they refuse
They are the ones who really lose.

The Truth About Envy

I like to see the flowers grow,
To see the pansies in a row;
I think a well-kept garden's fine,
And wish that such a one were mine;
But one can't have a stock of flowers
Unless he digs and digs for hours.

My ground is always bleak and bare;
The roses do not flourish there.
And where I once sowed poppy seeds
Is now a tangled mass of weeds.
I'm fond of flowers, but admit,
For digging I don't care a bit.

I envy men whose yards are gay,
But never work as hard as they;
I also envy men who own
More wealth than I have ever known.
I'm like a lot of men who yearn
For joys that they refuse to earn.

You cannot have the joys of work
And take the comfort of a shirk.
I find the man I envy most
Is he who's longest at his post.
I could have gold and roses, too,
If I would work like those who do.

Living

If through the years we're not to do
  Much finer deeds than we have done;
If we must merely wander through
  Time's garden, idling in the sun;
If there is nothing big ahead,
Why do we fear to join the dead?

Unless to-morrow means that we
  Shall do some needed service here;
That tasks are waiting you and me
  That will be lost, save we appear;
Then why this dreadful thought of sorrow
That we may never see to-morrow?

If all our finest deeds are done,
  And all our splendor's in the past;
If there's no battle to be won,
  What matter if to-day's our last?
Is life so sweet that we would live
Though nothing back to life we give?

It is not greatness to have clung
  To life through eighty fruitless years;
The man who dies in action, young,
  Deserves our praises and our cheers,
Who ventures all for one great deed
And gives his life to serve life's need.

On Being Broke

Don't mind being broke at all,
When I can say that what I had
Was spent for toys for kiddies small
And that the spending made 'em glad.
I don't regret the money gone,
If happiness it left behind.
An empty purse I'll look upon
Contented, if its record's kind.
There's no disgrace in being broke,
Unless it's due to flying high;
Though poverty is not a joke,
The only thing that counts is "why?"

The dollars come to me and go;
To-day I've eight or ten to spend;
To-morrow I'll be sailing low,
And have to lean upon a friend.
But if that little bunch of mine
Is richer by some toy or frill,
I'll face the world and never whine
Because I lack a dollar bill.
I'm satisfied, if I can see
One smile that hadn't bloomed before.
The only thing that counts with me
Is what I've spent my money for.

I might regret my sorry plight,
If selfishness brought it about;

If for the fun I had last night,
Some joy they'd have to go without.
But if I've swapped my bit of gold,
For laughter and a happier pack
Of youngsters in my little fold
I'll never wish those dollars back.
If I have traded coin for things
They needed and have left them glad,
Then being broke no sorrow brings—
I've done my best with what I had.

The Broken Drum

There is sorrow in the household;
There's a grief too hard to bear;
There's a little cheek that's tear-stained;
There's a sobbing baby there.
And try how we will to comfort,
Still the tiny teardrops come;
For, to solve a vexing problem,
Curly Locks has wrecked his drum.

It had puzzled him and worried,
How the drum created sound;
For he couldn't understand it;
It was not enough to pound
With his tiny hands and drumsticks,
And at last the day has come,

When another hope is shattered;
Now in ruins lies his drum.

With his metal bank he broke it,
Tore the tightened skin aside,
Gazed on vacant space bewildered,
Then he broke right down and cried.
For the broken bubble shocked him
And the baby tears must come;
Now a joy has gone forever:
Curly Locks has wrecked his drum.

While his mother tries to soothe him,
I am sitting here alone;
In the life that lies behind me,
Many shocks like that I've known.
And the boy who's upstairs weeping,
In the years that are to come
Will learn that many pleasures
Are as empty as his drum.

Mother's Excuses

Mother for me made excuses
When I was a little tad;
Found some reason for my conduct
When it had been very bad.

Blamed it on a recent illness
Or my nervousness and told
Father to be easy with me
Every time he had to scold.

And I knew, as well as any
Roguish, healthy lad of ten,
Mother really wasn't telling
Truthful things to father then.
I knew I deserved the whipping,
Knew that I'd been very bad,
Knew that mother knew it also
When she intervened with dad.

I knew that my recent illness
Hadn't anything to do
With the mischief I'd been up to,
And I knew that mother knew.
But remembering my fever
And my nervous temperament,
Father put away the shingle
And postponed the sad event.

Now his mother, when I threaten
Punishment for this and that,
Calls to mind the dreary night hours
When beside his bed we sat.
Comes and tells me that he's nervous,
That's the reason he was bad,

And the boy and doting mother
Put it over on the dad.

Some day when he's grown as I am,
With a boy on mischief bent,
He will hear the timeworn story
Of the nervous temperament.
And remembering the shingle
That aside I always threw,
All I hope is that he'll let them
Put it over on him, too.

As It Is

I might wish the world were better,
I might sit around and sigh
For a water that is wetter
And a bluer sort of sky.
There are times I think the weather
Could be much improved upon,
But when taken altogether
It's a good old world we're on.
I might tell how I would make it,
But when I have had my say
It is still my job to take it
As it is, from day to day.

I might wish that men were kinder,
And less eager after gold;
I might wish that they were blinder
To the faults they now behold.
And I'd try to make them gentle,
And more tolerant in strife
And a bit more sentimental
O'er the finer things of life.
But I am not here to make them,
Or to work in human clay;
It is just my work to take them
As they are from day to day.

Here's a world that suffers sorrow,
Here are bitterness and pain,
And the joy we plan to-morrow
May be ruined by the rain.
Here are hate and greed and badness,
Here are love and friendship, too,
But the most of it is gladness
When at last we've run it through.
Could we only understand it
As we shall some distant day,
We should see that He who planned it
Knew our needs along the way.

A Boy's Tribute

Prettiest girl I've ever seen
Is Ma.
Lovelier than any queen
Is Ma.
Girls with curls go walking by,
Dainty, graceful, bold an' shy,
But the one that takes my eye
Is Ma.

Every girl made into one
Is Ma.
Sweetest girl to look upon
Is Ma.
Seen 'em short and seen 'em tall,
Seen 'em big and seen 'em small,
But the finest one of all
Is Ma.

Best of all the girls on earth
Is Ma.
One that all the rest is worth
Is Ma.
Some have beauty, some have grace,
Some look nice in silk and lace,
But the one that takes first place
Is Ma.

Sweetest singer in the land
Is Ma.
She that has the softest hand
Is Ma.
Tenderest, gentlest nurse is she,
Full of fun as she can be,
An' the only girl for me
Is Ma.

Bet if there's an angel here
It's Ma.
If God has a sweetheart dear
It's Ma.
Take the girls that artists draw,
An' all the girls I ever saw,
The only one without a flaw
Is Ma.

Up to the Ceiling

Up to the ceiling
And down to the floor,
Hear him now squealing
And calling for more.
Laughing and shouting,
"Away up!" he cries.
Who could be doubting
The love in his eyes.
Heigho! my baby!
And heigho! my son!
Up to the ceiling
Is wonderful fun.

Bigger than daddy
And bigger than mother;
Only a laddie,
But bigger than brother.
Laughing and crowing
And squirming and wriggling,
Cheeks fairly glowing,
Now cooing and giggling!
Down to the cellar,
Then quick as a dart
Up to the ceiling
Brings joy to the heart.

Gone is the hurry,
The anguish and sting,

The heartache and worry
That business cares bring;
Gone is the hustle,
The clamor for gold,
The rush and the bustle
The day's affairs hold.
Peace comes to the battered
Old heart of his dad,
When "up to the ceiling"
He plays with his lad.

Thanksgiving

Gettin' together to smile an' rejoice,
An' eatin' an' laughin' with folks of your choice;
An' kissin' the girls an' declarin' that they
Are growin' more beautiful day after day;
Chattin' an' braggin' a bit with the men,
Buildin' the old family circle again;
Livin' the wholesome an' old-fashioned cheer,
Just for awhile at the end of the year.

Greetings fly fast as we crowd through the door
And under the old roof we gather once more
Just as we did when the youngsters were small;
Mother's a little bit grayer, that's all.
Father's a little bit older, but still
Ready to romp an' to laugh with a will.

Here we are back at the table again
Tellin' our stories as women an' men.

Bowed are our heads for a moment in prayer;
Oh, but we're grateful an' glad to be there.
Home from the east land an' home from the west,
Home with the folks that are dearest an' best.
Out of the sham of the cities afar
We've come for a time to be just what we are.
Here we can talk of ourselves an' be frank,
Forgettin' position an' station an' rank.

Give me the end of the year an' its fun
When most of the plannin' an' toilin' is done;
Bring all the wanderers home to the nest,
Let me sit down with the ones I love best,
Hear the old voices still ringin' with song,
See the old faces unblemished by wrong,
See the old table with all of its chairs
An' I'll put soul in my Thanksgivin' prayers.

The Boy Soldier

Each evening on my lap there climbs
  A little boy of three,
And with his dimpled, chubby fists
  He pounds me shamefully.
He gives my beard a vicious tug,
  He bravely pulls my nose;

And then he tussles with my hair
And then explores my clothes.

He throws my pencils on the floor;
My watch is his delight;
He never seems to think that I
Have any private right.
And though he breaks my good cigars,
With all his cunning art,
He works a greater ruin, far,
Deep down within my heart.

This roguish little tyke who sits
Each night upon my knee,
And hammers at his poor old dad,
Is bound to conquer me.
He little knows that long ago,
He forced the gates apart,
And marched triumphantly into
The city of my heart.

Some day perhaps, in years to come,
When he is older grown,
He, too, will be assailed as I,
By youngsters of his own.
And when at last a little lad
Gives battle on his knee,
I know that he'll be captured, too,
Just as he captured me.

My Land

My land is where the kind folks are,
And where the friends are true,
Where comrades brave will travel far
Some kindly deed to do.
My land is where the smiles are bright
And where the speech is sweet,
And where men cling to what is right
Regardless of defeat.

My land is where the starry flag
Gleams brightly in the sun;
The land of rugged mountain crag,
The land where rivers run,
Where cheeks are tanned and hearts are bold
And women fair to see,
And all is not a strife for gold—
That land is home to me.

My land is where the children play,
And where the roses bloom,
And where to break the peaceful day
No flaming cannons boom.
My land's the land of honest toil,
Of laughter, dance and song,
Where harvests crown the fertile soil
And thoughtful are the strong.

My land's the land of many creeds
And tolerance for all;
It is the land of splendid deeds
Where men are seldom small.
And though the world should bid me roam,
Its distant scenes to see,
My land would keep my heart at home
And there I'd always be.

Daddies

I would rather be the daddy
Of a romping, roguish crew,
Of a bright-eyed chubby laddie
And a little girl or two,
Than the monarch of a nation
In his high and lofty seat
Taking empty adoration
From the subjects at his feet.

I would rather own their kisses
As at night to me they run,
Than to be the king who misses
All the simpler forms of fun.
When his dreary day is ending
He is dismally alone,

But when my sun is descending
There are joys for me to own.

He may ride to horns and drumming;
I must walk a quiet street,
But when once they see me coming
Then on joyous, flying feet
They come racing to me madly
And I catch them with a swing
And I say it proudly, gladly,
That I'm happier than a king.

You may talk of lofty places,
You may boast of pomp and power,
Men may turn their eager faces
To the glory of an hour,
But give me the humble station
With its joys that long survive,
For the daddies of the nation
Are the happiest men alive.

Loafing

Under the shade of trees,
Flat on my back at ease,
Lulled by the hum of bees,
There's where I rest;
Breathing the scented air,

Lazily loafing there,
Never a thought of care,
Peace in my breast.

There where the waters run,
Laughing along in fun,
I go when work is done,
There's where I stray;
Couch of a downy green,
Restful and sweet and clean,
Set in a fairy scene,
Wondrously gay.

Worn out with toil and strife,
Sick of the din of life,
With pain and sorrow rife,
There's where I go;
Soothing and sweet I find,
Comforts that ease the mind,
Leaving dull care behind,
Rest there I know.

Flat on my back I lie,
Watching the ships go by,
Under the fleecy sky,
Day dreaming there;
From grief I find surcease,
From worry gain release,
Resting in perfect peace,
Free from all care.

When Father Played Baseball

The smell of arnica is strong,
And mother's time is spent
In rubbing father's arms and back
With burning liniment.
The house is like a druggist's shop;
Strong odors fill the hall,
And day and night we hear him groan,
Since father played baseball.

He's forty past, but he declared
That he was young as ever;
And in his youth, he said, he was
A baseball player clever.
So when the business men arranged
A game, they came to call
On dad and asked him if he thought
That he could play baseball.

"I haven't played in fifteen years,"
Said father, "but I know
That I can stop the grounders hot,
And I can make the throw.
I used to play a corking game;
The curves, I know them all;
And you can count on me, you bet,
To join your game of ball."

On Saturday the game was played,
And all of us were there;
Dad borrowed an old uniform,
That Casey used to wear.
He paid three dollars for a glove,
Wore spikes to save a fall;
He had the make-up on all right,
When father played baseball.

At second base they stationed him;
A liner came his way;
Dad tried to stop it with his knee,
And missed a double play.
He threw into the bleachers twice,
He let a pop fly fall;
Oh, we were all ashamed of him,
When father played baseball.

He tried to run, but tripped and fell,
He tried to take a throw;
It put three fingers out of joint,
And father let it go.
He stopped a grounder with his face;
Was spiked, nor was that all;
It looked to us like suicide,
When father played baseball.

At last he limped away, and now
He suffers in disgrace;

His arms are bathed in liniment;
Court plaster hides his face.
He says his back is breaking, and
His legs won't move at all;
It made a wreck of father when
He tried to play baseball.

The smell of arnica abounds;
He hobbles with a cane;
A row of blisters mar his hands;
He is in constant pain.
But lame and weak as father is,
He swears he'll lick us all
If we dare even speak about
The day he played baseball.

About Boys

Show me the boy who never threw
A stone at someone's cat;
Or never hurled a snowball swift
At someone's high silk hat.
Who never ran away from school,
To seek the swimming hole;
Or slyly from a neighbor's yard
Green apples never stole.

Show me the boy who never broke
A pane of window glass;
Who never disobeyed the sign
That says: "Keep off the grass."
Who never did a thousand things,
That grieve us sore to tell;
And I'll show you a little boy
Who must be far from well.

Curly Locks

Curly locks, what do you know of the world,
And what do your brown eyes see?
Has your baby mind been able to find
One thread of the mystery?
Do you know of the sorrow and pain that lie
In the realms that you've never seen?
Have you even guessed of the great unrest
In the world where you've never been?

Curly locks, what do you know of the world
And what do you see in the skies?
When you solemnly stare at the world out there
Can you see where the future lies?
What wonderful thoughts are you thinking now?
Can it be that you really know
That beyond your youth there are joy and ruth,
On the way that you soon must go?

Baby's Got a Tooth

The telephone rang in my office to-day, as it
often has tinkled before.
I turned in my chair in a half-grouchy way, for
a telephone call is a bore;
And I thought, "It is somebody wanting to know
the distance from here to Pekin."
In a tone that was gruff I shouted "Hello," a
sign for the talk to begin.
"What is it?" I asked in a terrible way. I was
huffy, to tell you the truth,
Then over the wire I heard my wife say: "The
baby, my dear, has a tooth!"

I have seen a man jump when the horse that he
backed finished first in a well-driven race.
I have heard the man cheer, as a matter of fact,
and I've seen the blood rush to his face;
I've been on the spot when good news has come
in and I've witnessed expressions of glee
That range from a yell to a tilt of the chin; and
some things have happened to me
That have thrilled me with joy from my toes to
my head, but never from earliest youth
Have I jumped with delight as I did when she
said, "The baby, my dear, has a tooth."

I have answered the telephone thousands of times
for messages both good and bad;

I've received the reports of most horrible crimes,
and news that was cheerful or sad;
I've been telephoned this and been telephoned
that, a joke, or an errand to run;
I've been called to the phone for the idlest of chat,
when there was much work to be done;
But never before have I realized quite the thrill
of a message, forsooth,
Till over the wire came these words that I write,
"The baby, my dear, has a tooth."

Home and the Baby

Home was never home before,
Till the baby came.
Love no golden jewels wore,
Till the baby came.
There was joy, but now it seems
Dreams were not the rosy dreams,
Sunbeams not such golden beams—
Till the baby came.

Home was never really gay,
Till the baby came.
I'd forgotten how to play,
Till the baby came.

Smiles were never half so bright,
Troubles never half so light,
Worry never took to flight,
Till the baby came.

Home was never half so blest,
Till the baby came.
Lacking something that was best,
Till the baby came.
Kisses were not half so sweet,
Love not really so complete,
Joy had never found our street
Till the baby came.

The Fisherman

Along a stream that raced and ran
Through tangled trees and over stones,
That long had heard the pipes o' Pan
And shared the joys that nature owns,
I met a fellow fisherman,
Who greeted me in cheerful tones.

The lines of care were on his face.
I guessed that he had buried dead;
Had run for gold full many a race,
And kept great problems in his head,

But in that gentle resting place
No word of wealth or fame he said.

He showed me trout that he had caught
And praised the larger ones of mine;
Told me how that big beauty fought
And almost broke his silken line;
Spoke of the trees and sky, and thought
Them proof of life and power divine.

There man to man we talked of trees
And birds, as people talk of men;
Discussed the busy ways of bees;
Wondered what lies beyond our ken;
Where is the land no mortal sees,
And shall we come this way again.

"Out here," he told me, with a smile,
"Away from all the city's sham,
The strife for splendor and for style,
The ticker and the telegram
I come for just a little while
To be exactly as I am."

Foes think the bad in him they've guessed
And prate about the wrong they scan;
Friends that have seen him at his best
Believe they know his every plan;
I know him better than the rest,
I know him as a fisherman.

The March of Mortality

Over the hills of time to the valley of endless years;
Over the roads of woe to the land that is free from tears;
Up from the haunts of men to the place where the angels are,
This is the march of mortality to a wonderful goal afar.

Troopers we are in life, warring at times with wrong,
But promised ever unbroken rest at last in a land of song;
And whether we serve or rule, and whether we fall or rise,
We shall come, in time, to that golden vale where never the spirit dies.

Back of the strife for gain, and under the toil for fame,
The dreams of men in this mortal march have ever remained the same.
They have lived through their days and years for the great rewards to be,
When earth's dusty garb shall be laid aside for the robes of eternity.

This is the march of mortality, whatever man's
race or creed,
And whether he's one of the savage tribe or one
of a higher breed,
He is conscious dimly of better things that were
promised him long ago,
And he keeps his place in the line with men for
the joys that his soul shall know.

Growing Down

Time was I thought of growing up,
But that was ere the babies came;
I'd dream and plan to be a man
And win my share of wealth and fame,
For age held all the splendors then
And wisdom seemed life's brightest crown
For mortal brow. It's different now.
Each evening finds me growing down.

I'm not so keen for growing up
To wrinkled cheek and heavy tongue,
And sluggish blood; with little Bud
I long to be a comrade young.
His sports are joys I want to share,
His games are games I want to play,
An old man grim's no chum for him
And so I'm growing down to-day.

I'm back to marbles and to tops,
To flying kites and one-ol'-cat;
"Fan acres!" I now loudly cry;
I also take my turn at bat;
I've had my fling at growing up
And want no old man's fair renown.
To be a boy is finer joy,
And so I've started growing down.

Once more I'm learning games I knew
When I was four and five and six,
I'm going back along life's track
To find the same old-fashioned tricks,
And happy are the hours we spend
Together, without sigh or frown.
To be a boy is Age's joy,
And so to him I'm growing down.

The Roads of Happiness

The roads of happiness are not
The selfish roads of pleasure seeking,
Where cheeks are flushed with haste and hot
And none has time for kindly speaking.
But they're the roads where lovers stray,
Where wives and husbands walk together
And children romp along the way
Whenever it is pleasant weather.

The roads of happiness are trod
By simple folks and tender-hearted,
By gentle folks that worship God
And want to live their days unparted.
There kindly people stop and talk,
Regardless of the chase for money,
There, arm in arm, the grown-ups walk
And every eye you see is sunny.

The roads of happiness are lined,
Not with the friends of royal splendor,
But with the loyal friends and kind
That do the gentle deeds and tender.
There fame has never brought unrest
Nor glory set men's hearts to aching;
There unabandoned is life's best
For selfish love and money making.

The roads of happiness are those
That do not lead to pomp and glory
But wind among the joys and woes
That make the humble toiler's story.
The roads that oft we used to tread
In early days when first we mated,
When hearts were light and cheeks were red,
And days were not with burdens freighted.

June

June is here, the month of roses, month of brides
and month of bees,
Weaving garlands for our lassies, whispering love
songs in the trees,
Painting scenes of gorgeous splendor, canvases
no man could brush,
Changing scenes from early morning till the sun-
set's crimson flush.

June is here, the month of blossoms, month of
roses white and red,
Wet with dew and perfume-laden, nodding
wheresoe'er we tread;
Come the bees to gather honey, all the lazy after-
noon;
Flowers and lassies, men and meadows, love
alike the month of June.

Month of love and month of sunshine, month of
happiness and song,
Month that cheers the sad wayfarer as he plods
the road along;
Spreading out a velvet carpet, green and yellow,
for his feet,
And affording for his rest hours many a cool
and sweet retreat.

When Mother Sleeps

When mother sleeps, a slamming door
  Disturbs her not at all;
A man might walk across the floor
  Or wander through the hall;
A pistol shot outside would not
  Drive slumber from her eyes—
But she is always on the spot
  The moment baby cries.

The thunder crash she would not hear,
  Nor shouting in the street;
A barking dog, however near,
  Of sleep can never cheat
Dear mother, but I've noticed this
  To my profound surprise:
That always wide-awake she is
  The moment baby cries.

However weary she may be,
  Though wrapped in slumber deep,
Somehow it always seems to me
  Her vigil she will keep.
Sound sleeper that she is, I take
  It in her heart there lies
A love that causes her to wake
  The moment baby cries.

The Weaver

The patter of rain on the roof,
  The glint of the sun on the rose;
Of life, these the warp and the woof,
  The weaving that everyone knows.
Now grief with its consequent tear,
  Now joy with its luminous smile;
The days are the threads of the year—
  Is what I am weaving worth while?

What pattern have I on my loom?
  Shall my bit of tapestry please?
Am I working with gray threads of gloom?
  Is there faith in the figures I seize?
When my fingers are lifeless and cold,
  And the threads I no longer can weave
Shall there be there for men to behold
  One sign of the things I believe?

God sends me the gray days and rare,
  The threads from his bountiful skein,
And many, as sunshine, are fair.
  And some are as dark as the rain.
And I think as I toil to express
  My life through the days slipping by,
Shall my tapestry prove a success?
  What sort of a weaver am I?

Am I making the most of the red
And the bright strands of luminous gold?
Or blotting them out with the thread
By which all men's failure is told?
Am I picturing life as despair,
As a thing men shall shudder to see,
Or weaving a bit that is fair
That shall stand as the record of me?

The Few

The easy roads are crowded
And the level roads are jammed;
The pleasant little rivers
With the drifting folks are crammed.
But off yonder where it's rocky,
Where you get a better view,
You will find the ranks are thinning
And the travelers are few.

Where the going's smooth and pleasant
You will always find the throng,
For the many, more's the pity,
Seem to like to drift along.
But the steeps that call for courage,
And the task that's hard to do
In the end result in glory
For the never-wavering few.

Real Swimming

I saw him in the distance, as the train went speeding by,
A shivery little fellow standing in the sun to dry.
And a little pile of clothing very near him I could see:
He was owner of a gladness that had once belonged to me.
I have shivered as he shivered, I have dried the way he dried,
I've stood naked in God's sunshine with my garments at my side;
And I thought as I beheld him, of the many weary men
Who would like to go in swimming as a little boy again.

I saw him scarce a moment, yet I knew his lips were blue
And I knew his teeth were chattering just as mine were wont to do;
And I knew his merry playmates in the pond were splashing still;
I could tell how much he envied all the boys that never chill;
And throughout that lonesome journey, I kept living o'er and o'er
The joys of going swimming when no bathing suits we wore;

I was with that little fellow, standing chattering
in the sun;
I was sharing in his shivers and a partner of his
fun.

Back to me there came the pictures that I never
shall forget
When I dared not travel homewards if my shock
of hair was wet,
When I did my brief undressing under fine and
friendly trees
In the days before convention rigged us up in
b. v. d's.
And I dived for stones and metal on the mill
pond's muddy floor,
Then stood naked in the sunshine till my blood
grew warm once more.
I was back again, a youngster, in those golden
days of old,
When my teeth were wont to chatter and my lips
were blue with cold.

The Love of the Game

There is too much of sighing, and weaving
Of pitiful tales of despair.
There is too much of wailing and grieving,
And too much of railing at care.
There is far too much glorification
Of money and pleasure and fame;
But I sing the joy of my station,
And I sing the love of my game.

There is too much of tremble-lip telling
Of hurts that have come with the fight.
There is too much of pitiful dwelling
On plans that have failed to go right.
There is too much of envious pining
For luxuries others may claim.
Too much thought of wining and dining,
But I sing the love of my game.

There is too much of grim magnifying
The troubles that come with the day,
There is too much indifferent trying
To travel a care-beset way.
Too much do men think of gold-getting,
Too much have they underwrit shame,
Which accounts for the frowning and fretting,
But I sing the joy of my game.

Let's get back to the work we are doing;
Let us reckon its joys and its pain;
Let us pause while our tasks we're reviewing,
To sum up the cost of each gain.
Let us give up our whining and wailing
Because of the bruises that maim,
And battle the chances of failing
As being a part of the game.

Let us care more for serving than winning,
Let us look at our woes as they are;
It is time now that we were beginning
To be less afraid of a scar.
Let us cease in our glorification
Of money and pleasure and fame,
And find, whatsoe'er be our station,
Our joy in the love of the game.

Roses and Sunshine

Rough is the road I am journeying now,
Heavy the burden I'm bearing to-day;
But I'm humming a song, as I wander along,
And I smile at the roses that nod by the way.
Red roses sweet,
Blooming there at my feet,
Just dripping with honey and perfume and cheer;
What a weakling I'd be
If I tried not to see
The joy and the comfort you bring to us here.

Just tramping along o'er the highway of life,
Knowing not what's ahead but still doing my best;
And I sing as I go, for my soul seems to know
In the end I shall come to the valley of rest.
With the sun in my face
And the roses to grace
The roads that I travel, what have I to fear?
What a coward I'd be
If I tried not to see
The roses of hope and the sunshine of cheer.

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PART TWO

THE FRIENDLY WAY

The Friendly Way

By

Edgar A. Guest

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The Friendly Way

Oh, I would tread the friendly way, the lanes
where children romp and play,
The hearty road of fellowship where brotherhood
is found;
I do not want the sterner game where life is but
a fight for fame,
Nor would I quit the valleys fair to stand on
higher ground.

There is enough of riches here, enough of mirth
and honest cheer
To balance all the hurt and pain as time goes
speeding by,
And as each day comes to its end, if I am sure I
have a friend
For greater wealth or greater fame I shall not
give a sigh.

A place to fill and work to do, of comrades here
a loyal few,
The children glad that I'm their dad—all that's
my treasure store;

A happy home in which to live—what further has
this life to give?
And where's the rich man with his wealth who
really gathers more?

I would not shirk nor idly stand before the tasks
which come to hand,
I would not fail in duty's hour: but once my
work is done,
I would be father to my own, a neighbor in my
little zone,
A man among my fellowmen, and friend to every
one.

Supper-Time

The fire is 'neath the kettle
  And the steak is in the pan;
Now a man is coming homeward
  Who went out when day began;
And a woman hums a ditty
  As she brings the dishes out—
Once again it's time for supper
  All the nation round about.

The pie is in the oven
  And it's time to brew the tea;
Come the children to the kitchen
  Just as hungry as can be.
All this mighty nation over,
  Wheresoever you may roam,
It is time once more for supper
  And the men are coming home.

Though some there are like breakfast,
  And some the noon-day fare,
I choose the evening supper
  When I am done with care;
For love has set the table
  And made the meal complete,
And every bite is seasoned
  With mirth and laughter sweet.

From countless humble chimneys
Smoke columns curl and climb,
Proclaiming, nation over,
That it is supper-time.
And on the streets and pathways
Where falls the evening gloam,
The tired and hungry fathers
Again are coming home.

Ready for Promotion

There's going to be a vacancy above you later on;
Some day you'll find the foreman or the superintendent gone,
And are you growing big enough, when this shall be the case,
To quit the post you're holding now and step into his place?

You do the work you have to do with ease from day to day,
But are you getting ready to deserve the larger pay?
If there should come a vacancy with bigger tasks to do,
Could you step in and fill the place if it were offered you?

To-morrow's not so far away, nor is the goal you seek;
To-day you should be training for the work you'll do next week.
The bigger job is just ahead, each day new changes brings—
Suppose that post were vacant now, could you take charge of things?

It's not enough to know enough to hold your place
to-day;
It's not enough to do enough to earn your weekly
pay;
Some day there'll be a vacancy with greater tasks
to do—
Will you be ready for the place when it shall fall
to you?

The Singer's Revenge

It was a singer of renown who did a desperate thing,
For all who asked him out to dine requested him to sing.
This imposition on his art they couldn't seem to see.
For friendship's sake they thought he ought to work without a fee.

And so he planned a dinner, too, of fish and fowl and wine,
And asked his friends of high degree to come with him to dine.
His banker and his tailor came, his doctor, too, was there,
Likewise a leading plumber who'd become a millionaire.

The singer fed his guests and smiled, a gracious host was he;
With every course he ladled out delicious flattery,
And when at last the meal was done, he tossed his man a wink,
"Good friends," said he, "I've artists here you'll all enjoy, I think.

"I've trousers needing buttons, Mr. Tailor, if you please,
Will you oblige us all to-night by sewing some on these?

I've several pairs all handy-by, now let your needle jerk;
My guests will be delighted to behold you as you work.

"Now, doctor, just a moment, pray, I cannot sing a note;
I asked you here because I thought you'd like to spray my throat;
I know that during business hours for this you charge a fee,
But surely you'll be glad to serve my friends, to-night, and me?"

The plumber then was asked if he would mend a pipe or two;
A very simple thing, of course, to urge a friend to do;
But reddest grew the banker's face and reddest grew his neck,
Requested in his dinner clothes to cash a good sized check.

His guests astounded looked at him. Said they: "We are surprised!
To ask us here to work for you is surely ill-advised.
'Tis most improper, impolite!" The singer shrieked in glee:
"My friends, I've only treated you as you have treated me."

Myself

I have to live with myself, and so
I want to be fit for myself to know;
I want to be able as days go by
Always to look myself straight in the eye;
I dont want to stand with the setting sun
And hate myself for the things I've done.

I don't want to keep on a closet shelf
A lot of secrets about myself,
And fool myself as I come and go
Into thinking that nobody else will know
The kind of a man I really am;
I don't want to dress myself up in sham.

I want to go out with my head erect,
I want to deserve all men's respect;
But here in the struggle for fame and pelf,
I want to be able to like myself.
I don't want to think as I come and go
That I'm bluster and bluff and empty show.

I never can hide myself from me,
I see what others may never see,
I know what others may never know,
I never can fool myself—and so,
Whatever happens, I want to be
Self-respecting and conscience free.

If Life Should Say to Me

If life should say to me: "Shut eyes to beauty,
Keep heart and strength and mind upon your duty,
See not the flowers or bees which sip their honey,
See nothing in this lovely world but money
That way lies fortune." Blundering I'd go
And stop to gaze at tulips, row on row.

As does the boy, upon an errand sent,
Delay to watch a fire or accident,
Forgetting both his mission and its need—
So I, though duty bound, should check my speed
And stop to hear the noisy whippoorwills,
And play the laggard among daffodils.

Though warned by life to look nor left nor right,
I still should turn if roses were in sight;
Forgetful of my mission, I should stay
Held by a sunset or a garden gay.
And should a wild thrush warble—this I know:
I'd take his song and let the money go.

Crops and a Child

I have seed to raise and I plough the field,
And I plant my crops with care,
And I thank the Lord for the rain He sends
As I watch them growing there.

But I don't sit down with a book by day
And let my fields run wild,
For crops won't grow by themselves, I know—
Is it different with a child?

I've a boy to raise and I want a man
When his growing days are done;
And a man must work for the crop he seeks—
Is it different with a son?

Will strangers care for my wheat out there
When the weeds grow rank and wild?
If my crop would shrink if I idled here,
Dare I idle with my child?

Yes, I'll work for him, and I'll play for him,
And I'll do the best I can,
For the Lord has given me a son to raise
And I want to raise a man.

Yes, my eyes are set on the harvest years
When the long hard task is done,
So I'll pull the weeds from his life myself,
For I dare not shirk my son.

Pain

Were pain more difficult to give,
  And easier to cure,
Then happier all men would live—
  With less they must endure.

But, oh, the careless word can smite
  A blow no scar reveals,
And man can cause by just a slight
  A wound which never heals.

Devotion naught can separate
  Is difficult to gain,
So swiftly grow the seeds of hate
  And bitterness and pain.

And one with but a scornful glance
  Can change a friend to foe,
And not recall the circumstance
  Wherein he dealt the blow.

How strange a world, where frown and word
  To hurt and maim are sure,
And pain, so easily incurred,
  Remains so hard to cure!

When Janet Goes to Bed

When little Janet goes to bed
  We seem to heave a sigh,
At last the paper may be read
  And all the toys put by.
Now may we settle down and hear
  The things the others say
A lovely sense of calm seems near
  When Janet's tucked away.

When Janet's up and on her feet
  The home's at her command.
For one so innocent and sweet
  She rules with tyrant hand.
If I have something to relate
  Of what's been done and said,
I find it always best to wait
  Till Janet goes to bed.

Now should I sit me down to read,
  Or lie me down to rest,
She'll keep at me until I heed
  Her latest strange request.
And have I several tasks to do
  By which I earn our bread,
I never hope to see them through
  Till Janet goes to bed.

Ah, well, this roguish little lass
  Too soon will older grow;
Too soon these days of joy will pass
  And calm be ours to know.
So let her romp and let her shout—
  The coming years I dread
When we shall sit alone, without
  A child to put to bed.

The Patriot

The flag went by. He doffed his hat
And asked no praise for doing that;
He never boasted: "I am true!
I love the old Red, White and Blue!
I love my children and my wife;
Mine is a most unusual life,
Because it happens, don't you see,
I'm what I am supposed to be."

He paid his bills from week to week,
And never thought of them to speak;
He never seemed to be afraid
That men might think his debts unpaid,
He took for granted they would know
He lived as all good men below.
Thus quietly he went his way
Doing his work from day to day.

He never said: "Who looks at me
A law-abiding man will see."
When men by bars are not enclosed,
Respect for law is presupposed;
He could be trusted at his post
But never thought of that to boast,
And if you mentioned it, he'd say:
"A man's supposed to live that way."

He did his best, and let it go,
Without desire for pomp and show;
Those manly traits which marked him most
He never raised his voice to boast;
He played the neighbor; played the friend—
Was true to all men to the end,
And I should choose him from the lot
For what I'd call a patriot.

A Mocking Bird in Florida

A mocking bird in Florida at dawn begins to sing.
He floods my room with melody and sets me wondering
Can waking up to toil again be such a happy thing?

Incessant is his silver call. "Get up!" he seems to trill,
"The sun is at the ocean's edge and soon your room will fill.
Get up! Get up! Get up!" he cries. I mutter:
"Oh, be still!"

Oh, little silver throated bird, I cannot sing as you,
But when at last I quit my bed I've many tasks to do,
And it may be that I shall grieve before the day is through.

And I am sick with weariness and tired are my eyes;
The happiest man on earth is he who long in slumber lies,
And yet with joy you sing to me: "The dawn is in the skies."

I fancy you are right and yet so oft I've waked
to weep,
So oft I've risen but to lose the joys I'd longed to
keep,
That grumblingly I quit my bed and say farewell
to sleep.

But, happy-hearted mocking bird that sings the
morning in,
So much of happiness is here for human hearts to
win
That we should be as glad as you to see the day
begin.

Barabbas

Barabbas, convicted of murder; Barabbas, the ne'er-do-well,
Awaiting the death of a felon, sat in his prison cell.
Already his cross was fashioned—at dawn they would nail him high;
When down through the dingy cell house there came to his ears a cry:

"Barabbas! Barabbas! Barabbas! Barabbas whose hands are red!
Take you the lowly Nazarene's and spare us his life instead."
And a sickened and frightened Pilate who dared not their pleas deny
Released to the mob Barabbas and ordered the Christ to die.

They saved him with shout and tumult, Barabbas with hands unclean,
Barabbas, of evil doing, who knew not the Nazarene,
Was saved by a sudden fancy, turned loose and not knowing why—
Sent back to the street and the gutter, alone and unloved, to die.

In the gloom of that gray Good Friday the Saviour
they crucified,
And the mad throng stood about Him and mocked
till the hour He died;
They knew not what they were doing, but Pilate,
pale and afraid,
Stood at the window watching, regretting the choice
they'd made!

William Comes Courting

William comes a-courting,
  And smiles his best on me;
His happiest behavior
  Is offered me to see,
His eyes are bright with smiling,
  He speaks a glad hello,
And asks me how I'm feeling,
  As if he cared to know.

When William comes a-courting
  He stands, with courteous air,
Until I say: "Be seated,"
  And offer him a chair.
He asks about my business
  And talks of all the news.
When William comes a-courting
  I think he'd shine my shoes.

When William comes a-courting
  It's plain as plain can be,
Although he wants my daughter
  He's also courting me.
And I just sit and chuckle
  To watch this hopeful lad,
For years ago, just like him,
  I worked on Nellie's dad.

Missed

"It's not his money I miss," she said,
"For I've all that he had, now he lies dead.
But his gold won't buy me the tender word
That over and over from him I've heard.
Gold will buy me a great hall chair,
But it won't put his hat and his top coat there.

"I used to laugh at his farewell kiss,
Not thinking that was the thing I'd miss,
And I used to scold at his careless ways—
Now all that lies in my yesterdays
And I'd give his gold, could I see once more
His paper strewn on the parlor floor.

"The garden he loved will bloom in spring,
And over it all will the martins swing,
The flowers will smile as they've always done,
And I shall gather them, one by one,
But the thing I'll miss, is the muddy pair
Of gardening shoes which he used to wear."

The Padre

The kindly padre in his gown
Goes daily walking up and down.
The little boys with whom he chats
With reverence remove their hats,
And also reverence to show
The little girls all curtsey low,
While grown up folks like you and me
Wish more like his our lives could be.

"Aha," says he, with twinkling eye,
"I would not change you, though I try.
You should be good, and oft I pray
The Lord to take your sins away;
But Oh I love you, good and bad;
I love the mischief in the lad;
I love the merry hearts of you
In spite of all the wrong you do.

"Oh, were it not that I am bound
To sing the mass in vestments gowned,
And held by solemn orders here
To walk the narrow paths severe,
The boy in me on many a day
Would break the laws he should obey,
But I am what I am, you see,
Because it is my job to be.

" 'Tis very cold, this life I lead,
And heavy are the books I read,
And many, many are the woes
Which people unto me disclose;
But still I think that most of them
The Lord above will not condemn.
And I believe He'll love them, too,
In spite of all the bad they do."

A Grandmother Explodes

"They're letting him cry!" said the grandmother gray;
"They're letting him cry, and they've sent me away.
They're raising that baby on schedules and things;
They won't have a cradle that teeters and swings;
They won't let me rock him to sleep on my knee,
And his father and mother won't listen to me.

"That husband and father just laughed in my face
When I called their neglect of the child a disgrace.
'The very idea,' I said in my rage,
'His mother was rocked every day at his age.
Hour after hour in my arms she would lie—
No baby of mine was permitted to cry!'

"I suppose I know nothing of babies at all!
I've only had four of my own that were small;
I've only rocked four on these knees which they spurn,
And now from my guidance and counsel they turn.
They're training the baby. Well, take it from me,
The best place to train one is right on your knee.

"It wasn't my practice to sit calmly by
And go on with my sewing and just let them cry.
I fed when they hungered and not by the clock,
And I never begrudged the long hours I'd rock.
These new-fangled notions are wiser, they say—
As if you could better a grandmother's way!"

Mothering Babies

Mother never hears a baby
  Cry or whimper out in pain
But she promptly thinks that maybe
  She can make it well again.
People only have to mention
  Little tots in need of care
And they'll find her all attention,
  Anxious to get over there.

Let her see a baby sickly,
  Pale and white and under-fed,
And she'll hurry to it quickly
  Just to stroke its little head;
She will put by every other
  Pleasure women folks pursue
Just to tell the worried mother
  What she thinks she ought to do.

Art and music and the fashions
  Have no lasting grip on her;
They are not her ruling passions,
  And I'll vow they never were.
Babies are her chief attraction,
  Motherhood's her one delight,
And her fingers fly to action
  When a puny babe's in sight!

The Second-hand Shop

There's a little old man in a little old shop
That is cluttered with things from the cellar to top.
There is something of everything scattered about,
But whatever you want, he can ferret it out.
"Now just wait a minute," he says with a grin,
"I'll find what you're after. It's somewhere within."

This second-hand store of this little old man
I drop in to visit whenever I can,
For he in himself is a lovely antique,
And there's something about him so gentle and meek
That, just like the trinkets he sells, it appears
He has taken on charm with the dust of the years.

I chuckle to see him go shuffling around
Till the treasure he seeks in the rubbish is found,
And I fancy sometimes, as I sit there and chat
In that jumble of things, that man's mind is like that.
It's a second-hand shop filled with good stuff and cheap,
Gathered down through the years and all tossed in a heap.

Man gathers the good and the bad as he goes;
What he has, where it is, it is he only knows.
The stranger who sees but the rags and the bones,
Looks in without finding the good thoughts he owns;
But buried beneath all the rubbish that's vile,
May be fancies and dreams that are very worth while.

Genius

A skylark in a by-gone day
  Mounted the sky
Singing its long familiar lay,
  And passing by
Went men and women up and down
  With hearts unstirred.
Theirs was the business of the town—
  But Shelley heard.

The air had borne those liquid notes
  For ages long;
From countless million golden throats
  Had poured that song,
And still the people sold and bought
  And toiled for fame.
'Tis but a bird that sings, they thought,
  Till Shelley came.

Enraptured by that lovely thing
  And touched with pain,
With every nerve set quivering
  Like leaves in rain,
He stood the while the twilight rang
  With chords divine,
And caught the song the skylark sang
  In deathless line.

Who knows what beauty and what grace
  Are hidden still,
Buried among the commonplace
  Of mart and mill,
Waiting with patience through the years,
  As did the lark,
Until the genius appears
  Their charms to mark?

His Grandpa

Who thinks that we are too severe?
His Grandpa.
Who thinks the modern doctors queer?
His Grandpa.
Who takes him walking down the street,
And shows him off to all they meet,
And buys him stuff he shouldn't eat?
His Grandpa.

Who will not let the youngster cry?
His Grandpa.
Who slips him candy on the sly?
His Grandpa.
Who scoffs at every law we make
To save him from the tummy ache,
And fills him full of chocolate cake?
His Grandpa.

Who thinks that we are silly fools?
His Grandpa.
Who mocks all hygienic rules?
His Grandpa.
Who laughs at all his wilful ways,
And thinks him cute when he displays
His temper to the public gaze?
His Grandpa.

And yet who was it once was stern?
His Grandpa.
Who made his son obedience learn?
His Grandpa.
Who was it once pronounced the word,
Which now he says is most absurd,
That children should be seen, not heard?
His Grandpa.

Santa Passes

Well, it was a Merry Christmas, of that fact there
is no doubt;
The little house proclaims it for the toys are strewn
about.
From the break of day till bedtime there was laugh-
ter in the place,
But I fancied that I noticed something curious in
her face.
In the midst of the excitement there would come
a wistful pause,
And I somehow have the notion that's the last of
Santa Claus.

Down the years we've had him with us; every
Merry Christmas day
Santa Claus has paid his visit in the good old-
fashioned way.
For when Buddy rose to boyhood, little Janet came
along,
But I somehow have the notion she suspects there's
something wrong;
For I thought that I detected in her conduct, now
and then,
A break in her devotion to the jolliest of men.

She hung her little stocking by the fireplace as of
old,
And she gave a cheer for Santa, but it lacked the
ring of gold,

And though Christmas day was merry, I began to realize
That our lovely little baby now is growing very wise;
And I can't help feeling saddened and regretful, just because
I am sure our house last Christmas saw the end of Santa Claus.

Baby Letters

Oh you may have your letters with the line, *"find check enclosed,"*
And you may smile at letters which agree as you've proposed.
A friendly note is good to get; the mail's so full of things
That one can hardly over-praise the joy the postman brings,
But when you're far away from home, the letter best of all
Is filled with hugs and kisses in a youngster's awkward scrawl.

The President once wrote to me; his letter's in a frame,
I've kept a few epistles sent to me by men of fame,
I've smiled to read the merry news which kindly hands have penned,
But to the final hour of life of letters there's no end,
Except to those entrancing notes your babe sits down to scrawl
With penciled hugs and kisses, and I count them best of all.

You only get of them a few. With time's swift passing flight,

In but another year or two, she'll write as others write,
But now the mother guides her hand: "I love you, daddy dear!"
Sums up the news she tries to tell in letters quaint and queer,
And always printed boldly at the bottom of the sheet
Is a line of hugs and kisses just to make the letter sweet.

Time takes the joys we have away and newer joys bestows—
The lovely little bud of May, June blossoms as a rose;
The charms of childhood wisdom steals new loveliness to give,
And so these childish messages have little time to live,
But of the letters humans pen the happiest are those
With hugs and kisses scrawled below—as every father knows.

Every Boy's Chance

The night school swings its doors for all;
  Near-by the libraries are.
Who will, has knowledge at his call,
  Nor need he travel far.
Not much for wisdom need he pay,
  However poor the lad,
He has a better chance to-day
  Than Lincoln ever had.

However lowly born he seems,
  A richer child is he
Than Lincoln, with his youthful dreams,
  Who read beneath a tree.
However poor the circumstance
  Which hedges him around,
Life offers him a better chance
  Than Abraham Lincoln found.

Oh, boy, if courage you possess,
  And have the will to learn,
No one can keep you from success,
  From book to book you'll turn.
No library shelf to you is barred,
  No school denied to you,
Your battle cannot be as hard
  As that which Lincoln knew.

Who has the will to understand,
  Will find wise teachers near;
The poorest urchin in the land
  Has but himself to fear,
For 'spite of humble circumstance
  And fate and fortune sad,
To-day gives boys a better chance
  Than Lincoln ever had.

Those Reading Glasses

I've shined them on the table-cloth, I've shined them on the sheet,
I've tried my pocket handkerchief and tried the sofa seat.
I've blown my breath upon them in the way I've often seen,
But I'll be switched if I can keep those reading glasses clean!

The oculist once gave to me a bit of fabric square;
Said he: "Use this to wipe them off; my ad is printed there."
But, oh, I lost that long ago, and since that day I've been
A searcher after something that will wipe those glasses clean.

I've tried them on my bathrobe, and I've tried them in my hair,
I've tried them on a Turkish rug, but still the smudge is there;
I've tried the morning paper and a monthly magazine,
But I'll be switched if I can keep those reading glasses clean!

I've rubbed them with my coat tail and I've thumbed them with my vest,
But still the smear stays on the lens, and still am I distressed,
And still through blur and mist I grope, sense from the type to glean,
For I'll be switched if I can keep those reading glasses clean.

Suggestions for Men

She ordered her lunch, and then as she sat
At the table she took off her little blue hat,
Held up a mirror, as wide as a book,
And sideways and frontways proceeded to look;
She picked up a comb and she tossed back her hair,
She pulled it out here and she tucked it in there.
As I watched her I said to myself: "There's a hunch!
That's something to do while you're waiting for lunch!"

From a tube she squeezed stuff on her pink finger tips
And calmly proceeded to varnish her lips;
She penciled her eyebrows an ebony black,
And I wondered what else she could have in that sack;
She tinted her cheeks till they beggared the rose,
And the maid brought her food as she powdered her nose.
"Now there is a first-class idea," thought I,
"If the girls can do that why should men be so shy?"

Why doesn't somebody get out for a man
A neat little package, with soap in a can,
A razor, a brush and a looking-glass small,
So neat that his pocket could carry it all?

This is one of the sayings the classics produce,
"The sauce for the gander is sauce for the goose."
After ordering lunch, precious time could be saved
If, while waiting, he got out his razor and shaved.

Why not copy the women? 'Twould be no disgrace
For a man to be openly kind to his face.
With a neat pocket outfit like this I suggest,
Man could always contrive to appear at his best.
At noon time, on street cars, with moments to spare,
At the dentist's, while waiting his turn in the chair,
Or while dummy at bridge, unconcernedly grave,
He could take off his necktie and collar and shave.

The Disappointed Vocalist

No one will ever understand the misery I've known,
Because the good Lord fashioned me entirely deaf to tone,
And none will ever understand how I have trudged along
And secretly attempted to acquire the knack of song;
But every time we go to church my Nellie says to me:
"Don't sing the hymn so loudly, dear, because you're off the key."

I think I have the feeling and I understand the words,
I yearn to warble merry tunes as do the summer birds,
But ridicule and laughter have been always mine to bear,
In school the songs they used to sing they would not let me share.
I tried to make the glee club once; they handed me my hat
And said: "Please don't come back again. Your voice is much too flat."

I've watched our clever acrobats, without a trembling lip,
And never wished that I could flip myself the way they flip;
I've never envied champions in any line of sport;
I've never looked at taller men and sighed because I'm short;
I've never envied richer men, nor yearned to be a king,
But every time a song was heard I've wished that I could sing.

And should the good Lord send for me when I have quit this earth
And offer me a second chance to pass the gate of birth,
I'll say: "Right willingly I'll go, whatever be the task,
But ere I face the world once more, one favor I would ask:
I'll gladly brave life's weal and woe if you will fashion me
So I can sing a simple tune and not get off the key."

The Old Golfer Dies

Old Sandy was a dying man; the doctor shook his head.
"You'd better call the family in," unto the nurse he said.
"He tries to speak," the nurse replied, and bending low she heard:
"I want the boys, I want the boys—for them I have a word."

His loved ones gathered round his bed and watched him weaker grow.
"I must," he gasped, "say something to the boys before I go."
"They're coming, Pa; they'll soon be here," a daughter softly said,
"Give me the message you would leave," but Sandy shook his head.

They wondered what he had to tell and what was on his mind,
But none could guess the counsel which he wished to leave behind.
"The boys, the boys," he spoke again, "'tis them I wish to see.
I hope they will get here in time to hearken unto me."

Into the room they came at last, the old man called
them near;
"My boys," said he in faltering tones, "not long
will I be here,
But this I want to say to you once more before I
die:
Never play your brassie when you have a down-hill
lie!"

Strength

Be grateful in the morning for the day that lies
before;
Be grateful in the evening that you still have strength
in store.
What if you come a failure home—there's rest when
you get in
And those who keep their faith in you believe you're
going to win.

The coward wears his failures long and lets them
weigh him down,
And so with sullen eyes he goes forever through the
town,
He thinks the gods have picked him out as one to
trample low,
And he's a beaten man before his rival strikes a
blow.

Be grateful for the dawning day and all that it may
bring;
Don't carry yesterdays about like buttons on a
string;
Press forward to the field once more—one victory's
all you need.
You'll laugh at failures you have had the minute
you succeed.

The fighting heart may some day win, the quitter never can,
There's many a battle turns upon the spirit of a man;
And who begins the day with faith, despite his failures past,
May see the tide of victory turn and roll his way at last.

Dandelions

At dandelions men may scoff
  And fight them as they will,
But if they ever drive them off
  A lovely thing they'll kill.

I hope I'll never live to see
  The dandelions' doom,
For what would days of springtime be
  Without that yellow bloom?

I battle with them day by day,
  I sometimes rise at dawn
To drive the golden heads away
  That dot my patch of lawn.

I often think of them as weeds
  Whose roots are strong and stout,
And caring for my garden's needs
  I coldly pull them out.

But I should hate to see them go
  From field and countryside;
It would not be the spring we know
  If dandelions died.

Power of Happiness

I can recall a certain lovely spot
  Where all I've done and must do slipped from mind.
  Even the name I wear seemed left behind—
The I and me of self were quite forgot.
That day I was and strangely too was not.
  Just as a leaf is blown upon the wind,
  So pleasure sported with me and was kind
And banished every harsh and bitter thought.

When happiness is ours and laughter reigns
  We think not who we are nor of our care;
Forgotten is the past and all its pains,
  Forgotten are the burdens we must bear.
Self-centered though we are, come times like these
When perfect joy blots out identities.

The Human Body

By scientists, both wise and old,
The human body, I've been told,
Which weighs about one-forty-five
And is what mortals call alive
Is made of water, nitrogen,
Carbon, sulphur, iron and then
Potassium, sodium, iodine,
Magnesium, trace of fluorine
Chlorine, calcium, phosphorus—
Alike in monarchs as in us.

They've analyzed our flesh and bone,
To them precisely now is known
How much of this, how much of that
Combine to make us lean and fat.
The lovely maiden, fair to see,
Is water, mostly, just like me,
Plus so much carbon, iron and all
Those chemicals I won't recall.
'Tis proved, this stuff we all possess—
No one has more; no one has less.

Well, as they've measured, dump them in
A great retort of glass or tin
And stew them well and stir them round
And see if man you can compound.

I fancy you could mix for weeks
And never get two rosy cheeks,
Or from the batter you prepare
Produce a maiden young and fair,
Or anything that eats or drinks
Or laughs or sighs or sings or thinks.

I do not doubt this curious list
But think some properties were missed.
To me the human body seems
To be composed of fancies, dreams,
High courage, tenderness and skill,
Ambition, wisdom, strength of will,
Love, pity, mirth and all the arts
And these not given in equal parts.
And thus we differ, you from me,
Who share the self-same chemistry.

Hot Dog

'Twas two o'clock when he came in, and rising in my bed,
"Where have you been till such an hour?" to him I sadly said.
"Oh, she was hungry," he replied. "She had a sandwich yen,
And so we hopped into the car to find a hot dog den."
"And did you find one?" I inquired. "Of course I did," said he,
"There's one just twenty miles away—an Indian tepee!"

There was no harm in such a trip; so do our customs change,
That youngsters view with no concern what older minds think strange.
This hot dog craze is modern stuff; the car is at the door,
And when a girl wants frankfurters, what's twenty miles or more?
Distance and time are different now, and taste has altered, too;
When girls in our day hungry were, a hot dog wouldn't do.

We took the trolley home at night; no motor cars had we.
Who stayed till after midnight knew an angry dad he'd see.
But, is it fair to judge them now by standards long outworn?
The modern girls, it seems, like food their mothers viewed with scorn.
Though twenty miles seem far to us, it's just a hop to them
Who yearn for hot dog sandwiches at two o'clock A. M.

The Common Sense Man

I'm for the man of common sense,
  Who looks on joy and sorrow
As part of life's experience
  And does not either borrow.
He takes the bitter with the sweet,
  The honey with the gall,
The little triumph and defeat,
  And calmly lives through all.

He does not think that life can be
  An endless round of pleasure,
He is content to work that he
  May have some time for leisure.
Unchanged by fortune or despair,
  He lives the long year through
Clinging to what of old is fair
  And welcoming the new.

He plays the neighbor and the friend,
  Hears praise but little heeds it;
He knows that flatterers seldom lend
  Their aid to one who needs it.
He knows that critics change their speech
  When men belittled win;
And so he looks alike on each
  And answers with a grin.

Now should this man of common sense
  Grow rich or great to-morrow,
Though freed from worry of expense,
  He'd still be prey to sorrow;
He'd still be prey to every ill
  To which our flesh is prone,
And realizing this, he still
  Would keep the friends he'd known.

My World

Mine is a gay world,
  Where children run about,
A bird house in the garden
  And zinnias coming out.

Mine is a bright world,
  Where friends walk up and down,
And always there are kisses
  When I come in from town.

Mine is a strange world,
  With many things to see,
The miracle of daffodils,
  The coloring of a tree.

Mine is a glad world,
  Despite its round of care,
With books piled up about me,
  And an easy leather chair.

Mine is a rich world,
  With jeweled skies above;
Four seasons spill their treasures
  Upon the spot I love.

Mine is a small world,
  But wonderful it seems,
With room for friends and neighbors,
  And room enough for dreams.

Relatives

Relatives are people who
Bring little presents in to you.
They're more like friends who come to call,
Except you've got to learn them all
An' know their names, so you won't miss
When mother asks you: "Now, who's this?"

I've got two grandmas, an' I know
Them both becoz they love me so.
I know my grandpas, when they come
They bring me chocolate bars and gum.
You see how well I'm getting on—
I also know my Uncle John.

Although I'm only half-past three,
My daddy says, it's good for me
To know so much. I never miss
The right name when they say: "Who's this?"
It would be awful not to know
Your Aunt Irene and Auntie Flo.

It isn't often I forget.
I don't know all my cousins yet
Or what a cousin is at all,
But daddy says when you are small
It proves that you are very smart
If you know half your folks by heart.

The Doctor

Who comes when we are in distress?
The doctor.
Who hears our call and answers: "Yes?"
The doctor.
Who four and twenty hours a day
Is never sure of rest or play
And cannot put his work away?
The doctor.

Who asks no shelter from the rain?
The doctor.
Who braves all storms to comfort pain?
The doctor.
Who in the banquet hall will rise
And all its pleasures sacrifice,
Because somewhere a baby cries?
The doctor.

Who knows no bedtime fixed and sure?
The doctor.
Who all our worries must endure?
The doctor.
Who must his every nerve command
In times of greatest peril, and
Work with a calm and steady hand?
The doctor.

Who to the poor the friend will play?
The doctor.
Who sometimes never gets his pay?
The doctor.
Who, having skill and growing wise,
Must to great profits shut his eyes,
And neither boast nor advertise?
The doctor.

Who most deserves man's gratitude?
The doctor.
Who is it prayers should oft include?
The doctor.
Who all through life is standing by,
From birth and that first happy cry
Unto the last, when death is nigh?
The doctor.

Awakening

Oh, I wanted to be pampered and I wanted to be petted;
I thought that Life should run to me with comfort when I fretted,
And so I used to wail for joys I had no means of buying,
But Life went on about its work and never heard me crying.

I used to fly in tantrums when some pleasure was denied me;
I fancied everyone was wrong who raised a voice to chide me.
I thought that Life should run to me with pretty things to show me,
But Life went on about its work and never seemed to know me.

I know not how the thought began nor why so long it lasted;
I wanted cake and pie to eat while others bravely fasted;
I wanted easy tasks to do, high pay without the labor,
But Life, I noticed, passed me by to visit with my neighbor.

Then suddenly I faced about—stopped my senseless whining.
Took disappointment with a grin and loss without repining;
I found that woes were everywhere and some would surely strike me;
I strapped my burdens on my back—and Life began to like me.

The Eighteenth Hole

The eighteenth hole and the evening gloam,
The end is near and I'm getting home!
The club house looms in the twilight shade,
Where the boys will ask me with whom I played,
And just what sort of a score I made.

It's the eighteenth hole and the game is done;
What matters it now have I lost or won?
In many a pit and trap I've been,
I've had the thrill of a contest keen,
But I'm coming home with my record clean.

The best and worst of the sport I've had—
Some shots were good and a few were bad.
I made mistakes which I couldn't mend,
I've lost many a hole but never a friend,
And now I've come where the fairways end.

Lord, when I come to the eighteenth hole
And my last putt drops, as I homeward stroll,
May I be met at the club house door
By the boys who have all holed out before,
And be welcomed there though I failed to score!

Out of the Past

Out of the past what now would I reclaim
  And know once more if such a joy could be?
The brilliant deed which brought the touch of fame?
The smart investments from which profits came?
  What is it that is gone I long to see?
  What is it that still haunts the soul of me?
What torches through the night of memory flame?
I would turn back not once again to know
  The victories that were, nor to amend
  The failures, but to meet the friend
Who shared the struggles of the long ago;
  To live the joys which had so swift an end—
The charms which only friendships can bestow!

Fisherman

'Tis good to go a-fishing on river, lake or sea,
The flying gulls above you, and the waters just as free,
Away from wheels of commerce and smoke of factory stack,
A day of joy before you, and duty at your back.

'Tis good to go a-fishing, when skies above are blue,
Out of the long year's sheaf of days to pilfer one or two;
To have no thought of money, no urge for worldly fame,
To be at heart a fisherman, and a fisherman by name.

Men see you from the distance, and this is all they say:
"There goes another fisherman. May luck be his to-day!"
And be you rich or be you poor they have no wish to know,
For all the world is friendly to the men who fishing go.

So let me be a fisherman. No other rank I'll seek,
The care-free man upon the bay of whom the travelers speak;
For there is envy in their eyes which kings may never know,
And every stranger cries, "Good luck!" to men who fishing go.

Tea and Toast

Just sit me down to toast and tea
  And have the jam near-by,
With that no epicure could be
  A happier man than I.
What if the cook has gone away
  And left the pantry bare?
'Tis good to be alone, I say,
  And sup on simple fare.

I'll put the kettle on the fire;
  You get the dishes out,
And I'll connect the toaster wire
  And place the chairs about.
Let those who will seek banquet food,
  It has no lure for me;
On Sunday night I'm in the mood
  For toast and jam and tea.

On Sunday night I want no fuss—
  The kitchen board will do;
One teapot for the two of us
  With you to pour the brew.
Of all the meals, I must admit,
  The ones I like the most
Are those when we alone may sit
  And sup on tea and toast.

Come, sit you down; we'll be as gay
As once we used to be
Before we had a cook to pay
To brew our cup of tea.
Though many a fancy meal we've known,
Still happiest I am
When you and I may sup alone
On toast and tea and jam.

When I Was Being Rushed

The boy has gone to college and we're lonely as
can be,
But his letters bring a lot of joy to mother and
to me.
"I'm being rushed," he tells us. "I had breakfast
yesterday
With the Upsi Epsa Etas, and I dined with Ex Owe
Jay!
As I strolled along the campus came a senior up to
me,
And he whispered: 'Sunday ev'ning come and sup
with A. B. C.' "

Oh, the college that I went to was the big world's
ceaseless grind,
And the letters of our youngster bring those early
days to mind;
With a chuckle I recall them, and the things men
said and did
As they welcomed into business just another eager
kid.
At the tricks they played upon me in my ignorance
I blushed,
It was all so very different when I was being rushed.

For a left-hand wrench they sent me, for a round
square I was chased;
I was called to look at type lice and a spray of ink
I faced;

It was: "Hey, there! Get a move on! Run these proofs to Brown and Black;
Stop at Coats and Suits for copy and be sure you hurry back!"
In that school of harsh experience oft my cheeks with shame were flushed,
But I learned what legs were made for when I was being rushed.

Those old days gave us no emblems we could pin upon our vests,
But they did initiate us, and they gave us all the tests;
And much like these college "rushings" when at last probation ends
In the ranks of those we've worked with we have found our lifetime friends;
So I chuckle, recollecting all the type I've cleaned and brushed,
Saying: "Mother, as a youngster, there's no doubt that I was rushed."

Victim

"Hands up!" the stranger shouted, with a terrifying curse.
"Come on, be quick about it!" Then he calmly took my purse.
I saw his gleaming pistol, and 'twas folly to complain,
I kept reaching for the ceiling, as he took my watch and chain;
But I thought as he was leaving: Well, I know the worst right now!
Though I can't approve his methods—they're not doubtful anyhow!

I'll know how much is missing just the moment he is gone.
There will be no disappointment and no heartache later on.
He didn't cite me figures on the fortunes men have made,
Didn't say for every dollar ten would some day be repaid.
Oh, I've suffered many losses! Though unarmed the others came,
And with gentler, suaver manner, the result was just the same.

As he walked away and carried off my money in his coat,
It pleased me to remember that I didn't sign a note.
And it pleased me to remember once the man had gone away
I was done with the transaction—there'd be nothing more to pay!
And I made this observation when I'd rallied from the shock:
"Well, some rob me with a pistol—and some sell me worthless stock."

I'm No Milliner

Some men, encountering women fair,
Can see the brilliants in their hair
And note their gowns and later tell
If they became them very well,
Or were they pink or gray or blue
Or biege or any other hue,
But I have never learned to care
Or notice what the ladies wear.

To save my life I can't recall
Were Mabel's earrings large or small,
Or later dare to make a guess
Concerning Jennie's hat or dress;
I never by a woman stand
To count the jewels on her hand,
Or look some lovely lady o'er
And think: "I've seen that gown before!"

How oft to me has Nellie said:
"In all the years that we've been wed,
Not once have you remarked upon
The hat or gown that I had on,
Or raised your eyes above your book
To say: 'My dear, how nice you look!'
Women wear beautiful attire
For men to notice and admire."

Last night as she came tripping down
I thought to speak about her gown.
"My dear," I said, "I like your dress,
It adds unto your loveliness.
In all my life I've never seen
So beautiful a shade of green."
"Good heavens!" she cried, in accents cold,
"This thing is nearly two years old!"

Absent

I sometimes think of them as here
Or very near,
Who have from this world gone away.
Sometimes by day
I fancy Marjorie appears,
Despite the absence all these years,
To smile away my doubts and fears.

And sometimes comes the father, too.
The look I knew
So long ago of gentle grace
Upon his face
Shines out as clear
As when we walked together here,
And I am sure he's standing near.

The old friends, one by one, return,
As if to learn
The gossip of the passing day.
In some strange way
In fancy I can see them there
Beside the bookcase or the stair,
Or in an old, familiar chair.

It is not given to us to know
Just where they go,

Or is Heaven near or far away
No man can say;
But there are times I seem to hear
Them whispering softly in my ear:
"Don't worry. We are very near."

Old John

He knew the flowers by name, and though a man
was he,
Blood-brother to the daffodil and rose he seemed
to be.
He'd lived his life among them, and when spring
is in the air,
There'll be sorrow in the garden for Old John will
not be there.

From dawn to dusk he labored through the years
among the flowers,
And I'm sure he lived a richer and a happier life
than ours,
For his face was calm and placid, and he never
seemed to care
For the glory that is business or the crown that
skill might wear.

All his waking time was given to forget-me-nots
and phlox,
To his peonies and pansies, and his sturdy holly-
hocks;
And I've watched him many a summer bending over
bloomy beds,
Just as tender as a mother stroking little curly
heads.

Now the Lord has called him yonder, and the spring
is coming on,
And the tulips and the jonquils will be asking:
"Where is John?"
And I'm wondering what the roses and forget-me-
nots will say
When the word is passed among them that "Old
John" has gone away.

Customers

Customers are people who
Come to buy their needs from you;
They are fair to see, or plain,
Not like links within a chain,
All alike, but different, very;
Some are solemn, some are merry,
Some with sorrows great are freighted,
Some are quickly irritated,
But the cross ones and the sunny
Come to you to spend their money.

Looking at them as they come,
Happy face or visage glum,
As before your wares they tarry
You can't tell what hurts they carry—
What makes this one seem so swanky,
Or why that one is so cranky,
Or from cut of coat or tie
Just how much they want to buy;
Sometimes those who look the poorest
Are the ones whose pay is surest.

Customers are people who
Long remember what you do.
If a sneer your face has crossed,
As a salesman you have lost;

If you think you have a right to
Pick the ones you'll be polite to,
Soon you'll find to your dismay
You've let business get away.
Never mind your whims and fancies,
Give your best and take no chances.

Evolution of the Flapper

The flapper of yesterday worried her mother,
And worried her grandma and worried her brother;
Her dress was outrageous; her conduct seemed bold;
And she was the constant despair of the old,
And they oft sat together as grown-ups will do
To wonder "whatever that child's coming to!"

To-day as I strolled on a bungalow street
This young woman in question I happened to meet;
She was pushing a little pink carriage wherein
A baby was nestled tucked up to the chin,
And she lifted a blanket and gave me a peep
At the cute little rascal that lay there asleep.

She urged me to look at his dear little nose;
She forced me to gaze on his fingers and toes;
She talked of his feedings, and pinching his cheek
She boasted the pound he had gained in a week,
And said, in the way that all fond mothers do:
"He never gets cross and he sleeps the night through!"

I thought as I left her, the frivolous day,
Like everything else, comes and hurries away.
The oldsters may think that the world's gone to pot;
That virtues they've preached are wiped out, but they're not;
For the best of our customs and manners survive
And they all get old-fashioned when babies arrive.

Perfection

Bright and beautiful and gay
Twenty roses in bouquet,
Twenty roses, pink and white!
Where could be a prettier sight?
But an expert shook his head,
"Just one perfect bloom," he said.

"Most of these have suffered pain,
Borne the wind and felt the rain,
Struggled for existence, and
If a rose you understand
Closely scan them; you will see
Flaws and faults that shouldn't be.

"Here's the only perfect bloom
Of the twenty in the room,
See the petals, note the stem—
Just as God intended them;
All the rest, though fair to see,
Fail the finished rose to be."

"Since," thought I, "the perfect rose
Only very seldom grows,
Is it any wonder, then,
In this teeming world of men,
Swayed and torn by storms of care,
Perfect souls are very rare?"

The Fish That Gets Away

Some mourn the fish that gets away
  And boast his size and weight;
They stop their friends at night to say
  How sorry was their fate.
Almost unto the net they'd brought
  This beauty superfine;
It seemed to them they had him caught
  And then he snapped the line.

Oh, yes, they had some fish to show
  For all the time they'd spent;
Some luck they'd been allowed to know,
  But they were not content.
The ones they'd caught seemed rather small
  When put upon display,
And could not be compared at all
  With that which got away.

He broke but once where sunbeams dance
  Upon the waters blue,
And though at him they'd but a glance
  His weight and size they knew.
Not one in all their splendid catch,
  Which came to them that day,
For beauty could begin to match
  The fish which got away.

Perhaps against us one and all
  Could lie the self-same charge:
The joys we catch seem very small,
  The ones we lose seem large;
We pass our many blessings by
  As though no worth had they,
And dolefully we magnify
  The joy that gets away.

About Golf Scores

I like the game of golf, I think, as well as any man;
I seek the links to play a round as often as I can,
But, after all, it's just a game, and somehow I can't see
Why missing putts and dubbing drives should worry men like me.

To shoot a course in seventy-two may be a mark of skill.
It may delight the soul awhile, but pays no grocery bill.
I've never had a creditor come up and say to me:
"You paid your debt to me the day you shot an eighty-three."

I've noticed when a game is done this good old world goes on;
It doesn't make the taxes less to shoot a hole in one;
Nor will your banker say to you: "This loan we must decline
Because upon the seventeenth hole we hear you took a 'nine.'"

With all there is to fret about and try the human soul
I will not let the game of golf destroy my self-control.
And though to play a simple course a hundred shots I take,
I chuckle to myself and say: "What difference does it make?"

Dreamland

Oh, there is a land which no grown-up may see,
Though he's sure it is wondrously fair;
It's the country where blossoms the sugar-plum tree,
And the fairies are sentinels there;
It's the marvelous realm where the lakes and the streams
Are liquefied silver and gold,
The place where the little ones go in their dreams,
And it's barred to the weary and old.

They won't let us stern-faced old cross patches in
With our terrible burden of cares,
For the place would be spoiled should we ever begin
To tamper with Dreamland's affairs.
It's enough for the day we should fret and should scold
And hold them so fast to the right,
Without letting parents and grandparents old
Follow after the children at night.

So when evening slips down over city and town
To Dreamland the little ones go,

Where there's no one to scold them and no one to frown
And no one to cry to them: "No."
There all through the nighttime with fairies they play,
And picnic 'neath sugar-plum trees—
In that wonderful realm till the break of the day
The children may do as they please.

On Going Out

The women folks look up at me
And cry: "You are not fit to see!
That coat needs brushing, and your tie
Is old and worn and all awry
And very shabby is your hat;
Surely you won't go out like that!"

They're fretted by the speck of dirt
Which seems to settle on my shirt,
And should the collar band be worn,
Or show a spot that's frayed and torn,
They'll give the ultimatum flat:
"Now you're not going out like that!"

How easily they dust the coat
And trim the muffler round my throat!
How lightly they apply the touch
Of neatness which I need so much,
That outwardly at least I'll be
What women folks call "fit to see."

Lord, when it comes my time to die,
Let not my spirit be awry;
Grant me the time, the while I live,
To ask forgiveness and forgive,
That this old soul of mine may be,
On its arrival, "fit to see!"

Let some one come to me who knows
Where every little blemish shows
And say: "This bit of wrong, repair!
Brush off those dusty signs of care!"
And with the same old friendly pat,
Make sure I don't go out like that!

Christmas Comes but Once a Year

God grant ye joy this Christmas day,
  May every heart be jolly;
Love kiss ye now beneath the bough
  Of mistletoe and holly.
The long hard year of toil is done.
  To-day the bells are ringing,
Put down your burdens every one
  And share the carol singing.

For Christmas comes but once a year,
  When harvesting is ended;
With merry din, the day comes in,
  By love and mirth attended;
The children dance and shout with glee,
  The eyes of all are beaming,
And high above the Christmas tree
  The Star of Hope is gleaming.

So homeward turn the car once more,
  And give a kiss to mother,
Let horn and bell the glad news tell
  Of each returning brother;
For man has conquered time and space,
  Regardless of the weather,
And Christmas Day, by God's good grace,
  Should find us all together!

Forever

Forever is a long time, the life of moon and stars,
A longer life than churches know, or prison gates and bars,
And I have vowed to love her, forever and a day,
A vow that knows no changing or crumbling or decay.

Forever is a long time, the life of sea and tide,
No calendar can mark it, no seasons can divide;
It has no bitter ending—let life bring what it may,
My love must last forever, forever and a day.

Though buildings fall in ruins and earthly splendors fade;
Though death shall separate us, still stands the vow I made;
Though fashions change and fancies sweep all charms we know away,
Our love must last forever, forever and a day.

He Who Serves

He has not served who gathers gold;
Nor has he served, whose life is told
In selfish battles he has won,
Or deed of skill that he has done,
But he has served who now and then
Has helped along his fellow men.

The world needs many men to-day,
Red-blooded men along life's way,
With cheerful smiles and helping hands
And with the faith that understands
The beauty of the simple deed
Which serves another's hour of need.

Strong men to stand beside the weak,
Kind men to hear what others speak,
True men to keep our country's laws,
And guard its honor and its cause;
Men who will bravely play life's game,
Nor ask rewards of gold or fame.

Teach me to do the best I can
To help and cheer our fellow man;
Teach me to lose my selfish need
And glory in the larger deed
Which smooths the road and lights the day
For all who chance to come my way.

The Vaster Future

It is so little after all,
  The cheer of yesterday is stilled.
So quickly do night's curtains fall
  Upon the day with splendors filled,
That ere we realize it comes
The sound of morning's stirring drums.

What was is done. To live too long
  With things accomplished is to die.
To-day needs men of purpose strong
  To brave the tasks it will supply.
So small and trivial seems the past—
It is the future that is vast.

What though you conquered yesterday?
  Death has not come to end your tale.
New tasks confront you down the way
  And are you not afraid to fail?
The rose which blossoms once, must bear
New blooms to-morrow, just as fair.

There is a never-silenced call
  For courage in the hearts of men,
Success comes and night's shadows fall,
  But one must rise to work again.
The thing accomplished merely leads
The way to more and greater deeds.

Keeping and Spending

These I would have him spend:
  Silver and gold,
Serving some useful end,
Playing the man and friend
  'Till he grows old.

Thus let him give away
  All that I leave,
Spending as best he may,
Comforting, day by day
  Hearts when they grieve.

But this I'd have him keep
  Down to the last,
Faith when the road is steep,
Faith when his eyes must weep,
  Holding it fast.

Silver and gold are naught,
  Those he may spend,
But howsoever wrought,
God grant the faith I taught
  Be his to the end.

The Dreamer

They may be happier who never dream,
  Never look forward unto finer things,
  But eat and drink and hear the bird which sings
The rippling music of a summer stream,

The hammer blow, the sound of hissing steam
  And pass them all unnoticed. Beauty brings
  To them no high elation and no sorrowings,
They live and value joys by what they seem.

But there is heartache in the dreamer's life;
  The pain of others tingles in his veins;
His sleep is broken with an endless strife;
  He longs for something which he never gains.
Injustice hurts him, and he cannot see
Wrong without thinking what it ought to be.

The High Peaks of Pride

Life gives us two or three sweet thrills we like to talk about.
The memory of the first home run fades not entirely out.
To every man comes soon or late one rapturous hour of fame
When satisfaction with himself is his to boast and claim.

That night the lovely maiden blushes red and whispers: "Yes,"
He walks the world on airy feet aglow with happiness,
And there's no doubt that he is proud and boastful, I may say,
With every right to strut a bit upon his wedding day.

The next event which stirs his blood and fills his soul with joy
Is when the doctor says to him: "All's well, and it's a boy!"
Or let it be a little girl, the thrill is just the same,
There is a pride in fatherhood which nothing else can claim.

These three high peaks of perfect bliss already I have known,
And now the graybeards say to me one other I shall own.
"You'll boast as ne'er before," they say, "and strut the way we do
The day your son or daughter makes a grandpa out of you."

The Sticky Morning Kiss

A sticky face upraised to mine,
  All smeared with toast and strawb'ry jam,
With eyes that radiantly shine,
  And pleased to kiss that face I am.

Straight from the breakfast room she comes,
  A napkined, laughing little miss
Who gives no thought to jam or crumbs,
  But wants her daddy's farewell kiss.

Sometimes there's jam upon my cheek,
  Sometimes there's butter on my chin,
Those fingers often leave a streak
  To mark the path where they have been.

A sticky kiss! That's true I say,
  A blend of love and strawb'ry jam
A glorious way to start the day!
  Oh, what a lucky man I am!

To-Day

We think of time in years, yet in to-day
Joy comes and goes and honor lives or dies.
What is to be when next the sun shall rise,
Save death and sorrow, is our own to say.
This morning's deed shall shape to-morrow's way;
In this brief act the life-long future lies.
Now we are judged as foolish men or wise.
Worthy of trust or reeds temptations sway.

The day is all-important, for the years
Are but a sheaf of days which time reaps in;
So stand you fast against the world's harsh sneers;
Be true to-day—the future's faith you win.
In this brief hour of trial splendor lies—
To-day your honor either lives or dies.

Worn Out

They left me home to "mind" her and I smiled at such a task,
To mind a lovely three-year-old's a job that I should ask.
Thought I: "I'll let her romp about, and sit beneath a tree,
And smoke my pipe and read a book, as happy as can be."

And now the day is over, and at last she's safe in bed,
But, oh, my feet are weary by the strenuous pace she led!
My nerves are all a-tingle and my muscles stiff and sore—
There's too much steam in three-year-olds for a man of forty-four!

I chased her through the garden, and I chased her down the street,
And little girls of three glad years have wings upon their feet.
I thought I had her anchored at a sand box, full content,
But when I sat me down to read, away Miss Mischief went.

I rescued her from water, and I rescued her from fire,
I took her from a fence or two all tangled with the wire;
I hadn't any notion there was so much mischief round
As in the day I minded her that little lady found.

But now the day is over, and now I'm nearly dead,
And now I hear her crying: "I don't want to go to bed!"
And I have learned a lesson which I didn't know before:
There's too much steam in three-year-olds for a man of forty-four.

Simple Things

I like to fling the doorway wide and bid a friend
come in,
I like to have a blazing fire in which my dreams to
spin,
I like an easy chair at times and books to read at
night,
A little garden space outside with blossoms red and
white,
A bowl of soup and home-made bread, a yellow
bird that sings,
For happiness, it seems to me, is born of simple
things.

Oh, I could write a thousand charms I've seen along
the way.
A red geranium in a pot, a little child at play,
A maple tree in scarlet dressed, a patch of summer
sky,
The blush upon a maiden's cheek, the twinkle in
her eye;
All these have set my blood aglow and never lost
their fire,
For life is filled with countless joys of which we
never tire.

We weary of the fame we win and sicken of our
gold,
The joy which once we thought they had they do
not seem to hold,

But man can sit with friends to-night and watch the faggots burn
And want them all to come again and wait for their return,
And when October tints once more an old familiar tree
There's none so bored by beauty but will turn his eyes to see.

No man grows weary of his fire, his books and easy chair;
The roses he has brought to bloom to him are always fair;
The more familiar joys become the deeper grows his love.
Who wearies of a lovely moon and all the stars above?
So, mindful of the thrill of power and all that money brings,
It seems to me the lasting joys are born of simple things.

As It Goes

At first the little lady said:
"No common fellow I will wed,
For I've ambitions lofty;
I will not choose an ugly man
A slender, gaunt and smugly man,
Nor will I take a 'softie.'

"The man I'll wed must handsome be,
Who knows what's what on land or sea,
Full six feet perpendicular;
He must be clever, brave and shrewd,
A gentleman in every mood—
In that I'll be particular."

The little lady fussier grew,
Found fault with every man she knew
And all who came a-wooing:
"Too fat, too lean," we heard her sigh.
"Too slow, too fast!" The years went by
And there was nothing doing.

"Too loud a laugh; too solemn-faced,
Too thick and bulgy round the waist,
Inclined to baldness clearly;
Too dull of speech, too slow of gait,
I still await the perfect mate—
Or one that's very nearly."

And then she wed a skinny male,
Bald, bow-legged, misty-eyed and pale,
  Who sold pop guns and rifles.
  "At thirty-five I've learned," said she,
"A maid would very foolish be
  To bother over trifles."

Tale of a Brooch

A little woman found a brooch upon the street one day;
It looked to her like jewelry the 10-cent stores display.
She took it home to pin her waist while out to wash she went,
And day by day that trinket gleamed as o'er the tub she bent;
But no one stopped to notice it. No mistress at the door
Would cast a second glance at things the washerwoman wore.

"It is a pretty brooch," she thought. "I'll wear it while I may,
Then give it to my daughter on her graduation day.
It's rather sad to look at now; I've lost a pearl or two,
But I can pay a jeweler to make it good as new."
So when the happy time arrived she asked a man the cost
Of two small pearls which would replace the ones that she had lost.

The jeweler the trinket took and gravely looked it o'er.
Said he: "Wait just a moment, please; I fear 'twill cost you more

Than you expect. These pearls are rare." She trembled at his speech.
"For gems like this we'll have to charge two thousand dollars each.
This is a most expensive brooch, exquisite, charming, quaint!"
The washerwoman heard no more. She'd fallen in a faint.

To find that brooch police had searched the city up and down,
And all the time it glistened on a woman's gingham gown,
And all the time it glistened as she toiled some floor to scrub
Or shed its rays of loveliness above the steaming tub.
But like this washerwoman, countless folks, year in, year out,
Perhaps are blessed with riches they have never learned about.

I Talk Business with Her

"My dear," said I, "when I am gone,
With wisdom you must carry on.
Not having me on hand to tell
What stocks to buy, what shares to sell
Will make it difficult for you,
So please be careful what you do.

"Of course I purchased Y. & Z.
At sixty-two and sold at three.
And when my stuff you catalogue
You'll find there's many a cat and dog
Not worth a dollar, which I bought
And should have made us rich, I thought.

"It is too bad no woman can
Possess the judgment of a man.
'Tis obvious when they invest
Women are helpless at the best.
Yes, yes, I lost on A. B. C.
Why do you throw that up to me?

"Despite my judgment it is sad
To count the losses I have had.
Please bear in mind, if even I
Pick all the bad ones out to buy
Without my wisdom, how will you
Determine what is best to do?

"Business is now an art precise;
Widows need excellent advice,
When the wise husband's dead and gone
The clever salesmen follow on,
And lest you very watchful be
They'll sell you what they sold to me."

Questions for the Boy

Boy, if a mountain you should see
  Crusted with jewels thick,
And you were told that you were free
  Each day a gem to pick
And bear away the precious stone,
Henceforth to be your very own,
Would you return with spade and sack,
Or on such fortune turn your back?

Suppose by him who watched it there
  'Twas very plainly told
That each could take what he could bear
  Of silver and of gold,
But must himself alone obtain
And carry what his strength could gain,
Would you begrudge the labor which
Promised in time to make you rich?

Well, college is a mountain steep,
  With jewels richly set;
And who shall venture there may keep
  Whate'er he wills to get.
But he himself must dig it out,
Unaided carry it about,
And to that mountain come alone
To make the knowledge there his own.

Who toils for truth shall find it there—
'Tis ever on display,
And none who watches you shall care
How much you take away.
The gems are stored on ledge and shelf,
But you must earn them for yourself;
'Tis yours to choose and yours to say
What riches you will bear away.

Little Miss Curious

Little Miss Curious, Little Miss Pry,
Little Miss What's That and Little Miss Why,
Little Miss Tell Me and Little Miss How,
Would I could settle your problems right now,
But wait for the answers. They'll come in their turn,
And some of the things you must grow up to learn.

Little Miss Question Box, flooring me flat,
Wanting to know all of this and of that.
If when we're naughty God sees and is sad,
Why does He let little children be bad?
Why can't the angels who brought me to you
Bring me a cute little girl baby, too?

What makes the whiskers come out on your chin?
Grandma has teeth she takes out and puts in,
How did she get them, and why does she need
Glasses whenever she sits down to read?
Little Miss Busy Tongue, I can't explain
Half of the problems which trouble your brain.

Little Miss Curious, Little Miss Pry,
Little Miss What's That, and Little Miss Why,
Come with your questions and wide-open eyes,
I'll do my best, though I'm not very wise,
For even I wonder, as onward I go,
And am puzzled by things I am too young to know.

"Just Broke"

Nothing's the matter with me!
I can see!
I can hear, I can sing, I could climb
Up a tree!
I am well, I can eat anything that's about!
I can run, I can dance, I can laugh, I can shout
And I'm blamed if I'll travel around here and croak
That I'm broke!

My arms are all right!
I can fight!
I can still romp around with the kiddies
At night!
I haven't neuritis; I haven't the flu!
I still have a fairly good foot in each shoe;
I am able to gather the point of a joke,
I'm just broke!

Nothing has happened to me
That I see!
My appetite's good and I'm strong
As can be!
The wife hasn't left me, the children are well!
Things are just as they were when the stock market fell!
I can work, I can play, I can eat, I can smoke,
I'm just broke!

The Little Old Woman

There was a little woman whose hands were worn
and red,
And long ago the beauty of her youthful days had
fled,
For she had suffered sorrow, and she had suffered
pain,
But after these had left her she learned to smile
again,
And out she'd come with cookies for the children
on the street
Till it seemed where'er she wandered there were
young ones round her feet.

She hadn't any money; she was never gayly dressed;
She had a shawl and bonnet which she called her
Sunday best.
And if you gave her something, in a little while
you'd see
Some other person strutting in that bit of finery,
And she'd give this explanation if you asked the
reason why:
"I thought she ought to have it. She's so much
worse off than I."

No one ever seemed to notice that her hands were
coarse and red;
That she wasn't good to look at no one ever heard
it said,

And the smartest of her neighbors, who appeared
to know it all,
Never spoke a word in censure of her bonnet or
her shawl.
So I take this truth for granted: that a sweet and
tender smile
And a heart so brave and kindly never do go out
of style.

The Master

They seldom show Him with a smile.
  Always His face is sad to see,
  As if a jest could never be
Nor He be merry for a while.
The kindly humor that could pat
  The brows of boys He chanced to see
  And say: "Let children come to me!"
No brush has ever pictured that!

The man who loved a little child
  And walked the common ways of men,
  Though troubled often, now and then
With those about Him surely smiled.
I fancy as I read His word
  I hear Him chuckling, soft and sweet,
  Telling to Mary, at His feet,
Some curious thing He'd seen or heard.

He must have had a twinkling eye,
  Which danced at times with gentle mirth,
  So greatly to be loved on earth,
So bravely on the cross to die.

Small Service

Time makes the little service great,
  Two thousand years ago and more
The Master saw a widow pause
And give her little to the cause,
  And still men tell the story o'er.

The measure of the kindly deed
  Is not its present worth or size,
The word of cheer one stops to speak
May lift unto the mountain peak
  The youth the desert terrifies.

One may himself a failure seem,
  And yet perhaps some trivial gift
His heart has prompted him to make
Unselfishly, for friendship's sake,
  Another from the depths may lift.

Lives have been changed in moments rare
  Along the pathways mortals plod;
Unseen and little understood
Are many ways of doing good
  And many ways of serving God.

The Struggle

Not in the goal attained or task complete,
  Or in the glittering prize,
  Contentment lies,
But in the struggle and the battle heat,
The pressing onward against sure defeat,
  The matching wit with wit,
  Hitting and being hit.

Men long to rest, but resting long to fight;
  Men stand to pain
  An end to gain,
But only the very old can take delight
From comfort, never broken day or night.
  Victors are fain
  To risk defeat again.

Contentment's in the doubting and the deed,
  Not in the triumph won,
  But in the keeping on,
'Tis in the hurt of open wounds which bleed,
The turmoil and the planning to succeed.
  Once rested, man would go
  New pains to know.

The long pursuit, the scheming and the fears,
The need for skill
And strength of will
And all the hardships of the building years,
Take on true glory, when their end appears.
Men at their tranquil time
Long for new hills to climb.

The Statue

We stood before a marble bust
  That critics called the perfect thing,
Defying time and care and rust,
  Once treasured by an ancient king,
A beauty and a joy forever
Which suffers pain and sorrow never.

The tranquil features never change,
  The smile is frozen on the face;
In all the years I think it strange
  That grief has never left one trace
Upon those cheeks, or gentle pity
Made lovelier those glances pretty.

Anger the marble cannot know,
  For stone is heartless, dull and cold;
It smiles alike on friend and foe,
  Stays young the while the world grows old;
Should it become a vile man's treasure
That face would never show displeasure.

Rather I'd know the living joy
  Of eyes that weep and cheeks that fade,
The charms which time and care destroy,
  Than beauty so superbly made,
Excelling any marble splendor
Are living spirits, warm and tender.

Heedless

Take time for friendship when you can.
  The hours fly swiftly, and the need
That presses on your fellow man
  May fade away at equal speed
And you may sigh before the end
That you have failed to play the friend.

Not all life's pride is born of fame;
  Not all the joy from work is won.
Too late we hang our heads in shame,
  Remembering good we could have done;
Too late we wish that we had stayed
To comfort those who called for aid.

The heedless moment robs us all
  Of memories sweet to contemplate.
We hear a faint and feeble call,
  But think we have no time to wait,
And later, when the need is gone,
We wish we had not hurried on.

Take time to do the little things
  Which leave the satisfactory thought,
When other joys have taken wings,
  That we have labored as we ought;
That in a world where all contend,
We often stopped to be a friend.

Nine Years Old

At nine a little girl begins
To beg her pa and ma for twins
Or if we can't arrange for two,
Another baby boy will do,
Or if we can afford the price
A little girl is sometimes nice,
But anyhow she often weeps
Because no babies come for "keeps."

At nine a little girl will shout
When older people are about
And rush into the room pell-mell
Her day's adventurings to tell.
Though older tongues may talking be
She'll pay no heed to them, for she
Has something marvelous to state
Which positively cannot wait.

Nor look, nor shaking head, nor frown,
Can tone that nine-year spirit down;
So filled her world is with delight
She finds no time to be polite,
Where everything is bright and new,
So much there is for her to do,
That she forgets our good advice
And all our talk of being nice.

At nine years old a little girl
Has hair that will not stay in curl,
And legs so bruised and scratched that she
Is oft a sorry sight to see.
Her strength has just begun to flower,
She's into mischief every hour—
A victim of the awkward stage,
And yet it is a lovely age.

Table-Cloths

Some people, when they sit to eat,
Prefer to see the table neat.
They want the linen spotless white,
The glasses dazzling in the light,
The silverware in trim array.
But, as for me, I often say
Give me glad childhood's table-cloth
Well stained with jelly, milk and broth.

Not long in peace could I abide
In houses cold with pomp and pride,
Or dwell where dignity commands
Precision's care from little hands.
I much prefer the happier place
Illumined by a smiling face,
The dining-room, where soon I know
A glass of milk will over go.

Be mine the room with laughter filled
Where no one frets o'er what is spilled.
For what are table-cloths that they
Should drive all merriment away
And why think accidents a crime,
Especially at dinner-time.
They gather sorrow for their pains
Who make too much of jelly stains.

I should not like always to dine
Where silverware and glasses shine
And linen white outlasts the meal;
Too sad and lonely should I feel.
In table-cloths I take no pride,
I want the children at my side.
My joy is in those splotches red
When jelly dances from the bread.

Silent

I did not argue with the man,
  It seemed a waste of words.
He gave to chance the wondrous plan
  That gave sweet song to birds.

He gave to force the wisdom wise
  That shaped the honey bee,
And made the useful butterflies
  So beautiful to see.

And as we walked 'neath splendid trees
  Which cast a friendly shade,
He said: "Such miracles as these
  By accident were made."

Too well I know what accident
  And chance and force disclose
To think blind fury could invent
  The beauty of a rose.

I let him talk and answered not.
  I merely thought it odd
That he could view a garden plot
  And not believe in God.

Possession

When they're very, very good
And are doing as they should,
When the youngsters are polite,
Never wrong and always right,
And this very oft occurs—
Mother speaks of them as "hers."

When the parson comes for tea
Should he take them on his knee
And a blessing, soft and low,
On their little heads bestow,
In those few brief, fleeting hours,
Mother speaks of them as "ours."

But if little girl and lad
Have been very, very bad,
Have their tempers been displayed,
Have they boldly disobeyed,
Then when I come home to dine
Mother speaks of them as "mine."

How to Be a Captain

"I'd like to be the captain of a ship that sails the sea;
I'd like to wear that uniform," a youngster said to me.
Said I: "Let's ask the captain what a youngster has to do
Who wants to be the master of a vessel and its crew."
So up we went to see him, with this question on our lips:
"What is it captains have to do before they get their ships?"

There was a twinkle in his eye as unto us he said:
"Well, first I tugged at anchor chains until my hands were red;
I scrubbed the decks and learned the ropes and trundled bales below;
I washed the dishes for the cook, but that was years ago;
I carried slops and polished brass—when I was young like you.
There wasn't anything about the ship I didn't do.

"I stokered and I learned to oil, and in a year or two
They let me take my trick at wheel which I had longed to do,

And well I mind the happy lump which came into my throat
The day they made me Number One of the Number Seven boat.
I served as petty officer for several years or more
And by and by as second mate a uniform I wore.

"And when I'd learned a little more—I don't recall the date—
My captain recommended me to be the vessel's mate.
So when you see a captain in his braided uniform
It means that he's been tried below, and tried above in storm.
He's had many years of service in the crow's nest and the hold,
And worked his way through grease and dirt to get that braid of gold."

Gift Givers

Six of us gathered together; we were eager to honor
a friend.
For something of gold or of silver we were willing
our money to spend.
We were anxious to give him a token, a watch or a
pin or a ring,
As a permanent symbol of friendship, but no one
could think of a thing
Which he needed or said that he wanted; no gift
which our love could supply,
Which already his purse hadn't purchased, and bet-
ter than that we might buy.

A dinner? He dines on the finest! A watch? He
now carries the best!
Already we knew him provided with all that our
minds could suggest,
So we gave up the thought of a token, and sent him
a feebly drawn scroll
As a mark of our lasting affection which his chil-
dren might some day unroll;
But I couldn't help thinking that evening the hap-
piest mortals who live
Are those who have left to their friendships just
something or other to give.

The joy or surprise and the gladness of owning a gift from a friend
Are thrills which can never be purchased though millions a rich man may spend.
And there is a rapture in giving which friendship is eager to know,
For love and affection seek ever some token of worth to bestow.
Though all men are toiling for riches, may it never be said while I live
That I furnished my life so completely that friends could find nothing to give.

Eyes

Eyes are different, some can see
Leaf and bud on many a tree,
Some discover, here and there,
Tiny little lines of care
Stamped on faces white and wan
Others never look upon.

Some, whatever they behold,
Merely see its cost in gold.
Theirs are advantageous eyes,
Shrewd, and sharp, and cold, and wise,
Seeing only things which may
Serve their own concerns some day.

Some have eyes which sweep about
Finding little follies out.
They can readily detect
Clothes which are not quite correct,
But they never seem to find
Rich endowments of the mind.

From the self-same point of view
Some see more than others do;
What is beautiful to one
Others never look upon;
And I wonder can it be
Life is merely what we see.

Rain in August

"Rain!" cried a frightened little child;
The thirsty earth looked up and smiled.

"Rain!" said a man who feared a cold;
The earth drank all that it could hold.

A woman slammed a window pane;
The brown earth reveled in the rain.

The humans put umbrellas up;
The lawns made many a bowl and cup.

"Rain," said the throngs in accents glum;
The earth rejoiced that it had come!

Envy

I wonder if the poppy shows
The slightest envy of the rose?

Or if the pansy wastes its time
Regretting that it cannot climb?

Do blossoms of a yellow hue
Complain because they are not blue?

Do birds which God designed to sing
Envy the wild ducks' fleeter wing?

And does the sparrow sadly mourn
Because he was not goldfinch born?

I cannot say, but fancy not.
Each seems contented with his lot.

'Tis only man who thinks that he
Some other man would rather be.

Brothering with Jonah

Jonah was swallowed by a whale,
So runs the ancient Bible tale,
And later cast upon the shore
To face the tasks of life once more.

How many, many times I've smiled
To hear this story as a child,
This ancient epic of the sea,
And wondered could it really be.

Yet I, like Jonah, have been swayed
From duty's pathway, much afraid,
And swallowed by strange notions, too,
Seeking an easier task to do.

I've been gulped whole by fancies weird!
I have been lost and reappeared
Once more to find my duty plain;
To laugh with men and work again.

Perhaps false teachings swallow men
Later to cast them out again—
At least that's how I read the tale
Concerning Jonah and the whale.

The Drowning Swallow

I stood beside the water's brink
And watched a struggling swallow sink.
It fluttered round and round, in vain
Attempts to climb the air again.
I wondered by what sad mistake
That bird was prisoner of the lake,
Or what sad chance had plunged it down
In such a helpless way to drown.

Gifted with skill and strength to fly
It could have darted through the sky;
On land had it but chanced to be
It could have found a sheltering tree,
But soon its little strength was spent
In seas for which it wasn't meant.
By wind and water thus assailed,
Out of its element it failed.

Oh, helpless bird, thought I, like thee
Men also drown in failure's sea;
By chance or fate, they, too, are thrown
Into deep elements, not their own,
And there they struggle, but to die,
And sometimes never knowing why;
But had they found their place on earth
They might have liked to prove their worth.

Creation

I never see a butterfly
  Or hear a singing bird,
But what in some strange manner I
  Am very deeply stirred.

Who first conceived the tender wings
  On which it seeks the rose?
Has human thought such lovely things
  To fashion and disclose?

O singing bird upon a tree!
  Has ever human mind
Contrived to solve the mystery
  Of how you were designed?

Man writes his loftiest thoughts in words,
  And builds with brick and stone.
But dreams of butterflies and birds
  Belong to God alone.

Contentment

Ask not too much from life—expect no more
Than just a few red ramblers at your door.
Nature is lavish with her summer charms,
But if with roses you have filled your arms,
Take but a step and some to earth will fall;
'Twas not intended you should hold them all.

The world is wide and brief the life of man;
To see it all is not within the plan;
Beyond a certain point on earth we cannot go.
Riches piled up have nothing to bestow;
'Tis appetite not money flavors meat;
More than his fill no billionaire can eat.

Who in his home finds comfort and content,
Has all that is for human beings meant.
Pride, power and place at last to this descend:
Who would be happy first must have a friend;
And who has friends and neighbors near his door,
Dines well and sleeps—would not be helped with more.

"They are as sick who surfeit with too much
As those who starve with nothing"; and to clutch
Mountains of gold and silver is to seize
Not greater joys but greater miseries.
Who for this hour his world at peace can see,
For this one hour is rich as man can be.

Faith

These are the best that our fortunes can bring to us:
Gardens of summer and friendships to cherish,
Now and then wild birds that sweetly will sing to us,
Now and then loveliness, quickly to perish.

High-born or lowly, life takes little note of us;
Life has no pride in our arrogant glory;
Never it turns for the wail or the gloat of us;
We are a part, not the whole of its story.

Brightly the sun shines on saint and on sinner;
Be what we will, it is all of our choosing.
Men may give prizes of gold to the winner,
But life has no thought for our gaining or losing.

Fatten our purses and still we must sorrow,
Still must our pillars of pleasure be shaken,
Still shall the frosts find our gardens to-morrow,
Still from our sides shall our loved ones be taken.

Only our faith has composure to bring to us
Faith, which is friend to the great and the lowly;
Ever it gleams, as the blossoms of spring to us,
Lighting life's purpose and making it holy.

Garden in Autumn

My garden wears a weary look
  Like one who toils no more
But drowses o'er the Holy Book
  Before his cottage door.

The best of beauty lies behind,
  The last rich bloom has gone;
To what is past it seems inclined
  To-day to ponder on.

A few brief days of life remain,
  And so my garden seems
To sense that further toil is vain
  And vain are further dreams.

An air of contemplation lies
  Upon each plant and tree;
I fancy that at times it sighs
  For joys that used to be.

So like the tired old man who knows
  The strength for deeds is gone,
My garden waits with sweet repose
  The change that's coming on.

I fancy that I hear it say:
  "The end is coming soon;
But I with tulips once was gay,
  And roses owned in June."

If You Would Please Me

If you would please me when I've passed away
  Let not your grief embitter you. Be brave;
  Turn with full courage from my mounded grave
And smile upon the children at their play;
Let them make merry in their usual way;
  Do not with sorrow those young lives enslave
  Or steal from them the fleeting joys they crave;
Let not your grieving spoil their happy day.

Live on as you have lived these many years,
  Still let your soul be gentle and be kind—
I never liked to see those eyes in tears!
  Weep not too much that you must stay behind;
Share in the lives of others as you'd share,
If God had willed it still to leave me there.

Personality

You may know just as much as the other man knows,
You may go just as far as the other man goes,
You may be just as strong, just as clever, as true,
Yet somehow or other he wins over you.
And you cannot see why this difference should be,
When you know in your heart you're as able as he.

The difference is not in the things which you know,
It is not in the skill or the force of your blow,
It is not in the work you are able to do,
It's in the personality labeled as "you."
The thing you don't see is the manner which he
Always at his best makes the effort to be.

He is keen and alert, with a light in his eye,
And a smile and a word for all men who pass by.
He wins their affection and values it, too;
He makes his life stand out, and just so could you.
But you scowl and you sigh and when strangers are nigh,
There's no warmth in your grip and no light in your eye.

It is not what you know which will carry you far,
It's not what you can do, but it is what you are.
Improve your mind? Yes, with books on the shelf,
But give time and thought to improving yourself.
Make the effort and plan to be that sort of man
That the world loves to honor whenever it can.

Memory

And if I shall remember
  The tulips of the spring,
The Christmas each December,
  The songs the children sing,
Their bits of merry laughter
  Which meant so much to me,
That's all in that hereafter
  I'd keep in memory.

I do not ask to go there
  With boastful tales to tell
I'd like to have them know there
  This life I've loved so well.
I would recall a few things
  My eyes rejoiced to see,
The tender and the true things
  Which brightened life for me.

And shall I wake from sleeping
  To face eternity
But these I would be keeping
  Of earthly memory,
But these I would remember:
  The songs the children sing,
The Christmas each December,
  The tulips in the spring.

The Smaller Joys

Give me the simple joys: the wild bird's song,
A rose or two to cherish as my own,
A dwelling small where constant love is known,
And I'll not murmur that life's way is long.

Give me a sheltering tree, a patch of lawn,
A few good friends to share my merry hours,
To walk with me and bend above my flowers,
And I'll rejoice to greet the coming dawn.

Give me some tasks to do, not leadership,
Nor brilliant effort with its larger gain,
But tasks which serve a need and soften pain,
And I can face the world with smiling lip.

Give me this small success: to play the friend,
To hold my post with courage, and to be
Free from the chains of pomp and luxury,
And I can walk, glad-hearted, to the end.

Merely a Suggestion

If you've found that grumbling hasn't paid you well,
If you've found men weary of the griefs you tell,
If you haven't prospered as you think you should,
Why not change your method, maybe it's no good;
If men seem to spurn you, 'spite of all you do
Something is the matter. Maybe it's with you.

Life is very simple. Men don't pass you by
Just because you're wearing last year's coat or tie;
Friendship here is builded not on whims like that,
Men will not dislike you, being thin or fat;
So, if you're not winning all that seems your due
Something is the matter, possibly with you.

What of your employer? Does he like your work,
Is he friendly with you? Maybe you're a shirk,
Does he seem to favor some one over you?
It's because that other better work will do;
Don't sit down and grumble that his ways are strange.
Give yourself a shake-up. You're the one to change.

If you've ever found your manners those which men detest,
If you've found that cunning hasn't served you best,

If you've found that growling hasn't been worth while,
And you've lost by frowning, why not try a smile?
Boy, if you're not listed with the brave and true,
Something is the matter. Maybe it's with you.

The Rounded Life

When you have done with your business and ended
your battle for gain,
When you have come to your glory and gathered the
price of your pain,
What have you captured that's lasting more than
the love of your own,
The love of your wife and your children, the love
of the friends you have known?

Give heed to the life you are building, for in truth
'tis a life that you build;
Is it a temple of gladness, with pictures and mem-
ories filled?
Or is it a sepulchre ghastly, a tomb that is silent
and cold,
With nothing to warm you or cheer you but columns
of silver and gold?

You were born to be strong, to be happy, to laugh
and to sing through the years;
You were born to know life in its fullness, with all
of its heartaches and tears;
You were born to know roses and blossoms and the
numberless pleasures of earth,
So stunt not your life as the miser, who reckons
in money his worth.

For when age shall descend with its shadows and the end of the battle is seen,
You will find the brave heart and the gentle as rich as the richest has been;
For his life shall be blended with beauty, he shall treasures of memory own,
While the slave to his millions of dollars shall sit at his desk all alone.

Take time for the pleasure of living, take time to be friendly and kind;
Be more than a maker of money, grow richer in heart and in mind;
Be a glorious comrade and neighbor, know the meaning of laughter and tears;
Live bravely and gladly and fully, and you will not have wasted the years.

Peace

Some have found it in a garden, some have found
it on a stream,
For the peace of true contentment is the depth of
every dream;
Some have found it on the hill tops, and the search
is ages old,
But no man has ever found it in a selfish strife for
gold.

Oh, 'tis plain what men are after as they scramble
with the throng,
'Tis the hope of every toiler through the weary days
and long,
'Tis the hope of every sailor standing duty far at
sea:
The peace which follows labor in the days that are
to be.

There are countless ways to win it; some have
found it in a child,
Some have come to it through sorrow, when their
hearts were reconciled;
But whichever way you wander and whichever
choice you make
You must leave a touch of beauty for the happiness
you take.

You will never rest contented if you serve yourself alone;
From your comrades, from your neighbors, comes the peace that you would own;
It is born of love and friendship, in a thousand ways 'tis told,
But no man has ever found it in a selfish strife for gold.

Men and Grass

Some blades of grass are tall,
  Some rich with green,
Some seem so very small,
  Some harsh and mean.

Stand close and you may see
  The patches of despair;
The difference in degree
  Of wealth that's there.

Stand off at dusk or dawn,
  And every single blade
Blends to a velvet lawn
  That life has made.

The cutter comes and mows
  The rich blade and the tall;
No favorite he knows,
  He levels one and all.

So with the world of men:
  Stand close and shame we see,
Plainly we notice then
  The difference in degree.

But from the distance viewed,
  Even as lawns grow fair,
The great, the low, the rude
  A lovely grace may wear.

And death, the cutter, mows
  Alike the great and small.
No favorite he knows;
  He levels one and all.

The Golden Chance

There is in life this golden chance
  For every valiant soul,
The unpenned poem or romance—
  The undiscovered goal.

Beyond the sum of all we know
  And all that man has done,
Life holds a never-ending row
  Of glories to be won.

Still waits the canvas for the paint,
  The paper for the pen;
Still searches Faith to find a saint
  Among the ranks of men.

Though man, it seems, has traveled far
  Along achievement's way,
His conquests and his triumphs are
  But splendors for a day.

In all that is of paint and print,
  And marvels which we see,
Life gives us but the faintest hint
  Of splendors yet to be.

On still untraveled roads of fame
The feet of men shall climb,
Far nobler goals than ours to claim
From the rich lap of time.

Unreckoned genius yet unborn
Undreamed of deeds shall do.
Night ends the old. With every morn
Life bids us start the new.

The Cynic Changes His Mind

Life couldn't please him, try howe'er it would;
Nothing on earth which he could find was good.
All men were fools; all pleasures commonplace,
God's greatest blunder was the human race.

Then came the day this pessimist fell ill;
He called the doctor, as a sick man will.
The grave physician looked him o'er and said:
"Cheer-up, old man! you'll very soon be dead."

"What's that?" the cynic muttered, with a sigh;
"Can you not save me? Am I doomed to die?"
"Doomed," said the doctor, "from this vale of woe,
This world of fools, to-night I think you'll go;

"I could perhaps restore your strength and save
Your pain-racked body from the peaceful grave,
But I refrain—my cures I will not try.
From all you've said I'm sure you want to die."

"Doctor," the cynic mumbled, "use the knife!
Do anything you will, but save my life.
Oft have I cursed the world, but 'twas a lie!
I've changed my mind—I'd rather live than die!"

The Lesson

When you have found the sweetness of your sorrow,
In some far-off to-morrow,
Out of your heart
Pain will depart
And leave a lovely beauty you shall cherish,
A beauty that shall never fade nor perish.

Though this dark day your heart is sick with grieving
And torn with disbelieving;
Though now you weep,
Across the deep
Tempestuous sea of sorrow lies a shore
Where peace shall soothe your soul forevermore.

There you shall wake to find the pain departed,
And braver-hearted
You'll go your way,
From day to day,
And smile once more, and turn unto your labor,
To all mankind a gentler friend and neighbor.

The Street

Oh, who can tell what feet shall fare the roadway
with the morning,
What grief turn the corner there without a word
of warning,
What burden weary age shall bear, what danger
youth be scorning?

For up and down the road they tramp, the fleeting
joys and sorrows,
Which never find a resting camp. 'Tis only man
who borrows
The oil from pleasure's shining lamp against his
dark to-morrows.

Death called last week across the way. Near-by
there was a wedding.
A babe was born but yesterday. All history is
treading
This little street whereon we stay, and all that man
is dreading.

Whatever be the street or lane, it knows the world's
full story
Of happiness and cruel pain, birth, marriage, old
age hoary,
And all that years of life contain from failure up
to glory.

Hope

Lord, as we grope through life enduring pain
  And doubt and disappointment and the stress
  Which must be met to build the thing, success,
Teach us to see that nothing here is vain,
That sometimes loss foreruns the richer gain,
  And injury may come in fortune's dress.
  Man's ultimate achievement none can guess;
Even dead hopes have come to life again.

Grant us that sight which sees beyond the day
  And finds the larger purpose of the plan;
No race is ended at the middle way;
  One easy triumph does not prove the man.
Let none despair or long with failure stay;
  Strengthen us all to do the best we can.

Keep Your Dreams

Keep your dreams—they're richer far
Than the facts discovered are.

Do not seek all things to touch;
Do not want to know too much.

Growing old, still play the child;
Keep some glory undefiled.

What if clouds are mist and air?
Still see ships sailing there.

What would life be if we knew
Only those things which are true?

If the things of bad and good
Were by all men understood,

Nature's hills and brooks and springs
Would be catalogued as things.

Keep your dreams, for in them lies
Joy denied to men grown wise.

Still build castles in the air!
Still see white ships sailing there!

Still have something to pursue,
Something which you wish you knew.

William Howard Taft

I shall come some day to your grave
In Arlington, and at my side,
Shall be the boy I hope to save
From all the shams of foolish pride.

And standing there, to him I'll say:
"This great, courageous soul remained
Against the perils of the day
Gentle, and kindly and unstained.

"Power from his charm could not detract,
With sympathy his life was sweet,
He never did one scornful act
To snatch a triumph from defeat.

"Men loved him best who knew him best,
In him the poorest found a friend;
By every spiritual test
His life was noble to the end.

"Here sleeps a strong man who was kind,
A great soul who had time for mirth,
Who rose, but would not leave behind
The simple beauties of the earth."

Suspenders

One pair of suspenders was all he owned,
And day by day through the year he groaned:
"Oh, for suspenders enough to wear!
Too long I've done with a single pair
Give me suspenders, I beg of you,
I care not whether they're red or blue
Or green or black or embroidered stuff,
I want suspenders, and want enough;
Lucky the man to whom fortune grants
A pair for each separate pair of pants."

Christmas came and his thanks to win
His friends and relatives brought them in:
Suspenders, satin and linen and silk,
Suspenders white as the whitest milk,
Suspenders yellow and red and blue,
Dress suspenders, initialed, too;
Purple, ochre and sepia shades,
Fancy, medium and common grades
Rubber and canvas and frail and strong
Fell like rain on him all day long.

It seems that his cousins and uncles and aunts
Remembered each separate pair of pants;
Suspenders from England, suspenders from Spain
Fell on him all day long like rain.

He piled them high and he piled them wide,
But still came more he must take inside,
And he groaned at night and he said: "I swear
I've suspenders enough for a troop to wear,
And I wish to heaven that these folks had known
Two pairs of trousers are all I own!"

Adventure

I've never flown the ocean nor ventured near the pole,
I've never risked my life with death to reach a far-flung goal,
But still not wholly flat and stale my life has been, I'd say;
I have adventured now and then and sometimes won the day.

There is a thrill in winning out against relentless foes,
To bring a zinnia to bloom or save a dying rose;
And many a man unknown to fame will testify with me,
He hazards much of time and care who moves a maple tree.

Adventure does not wholly lie beyond the paths of man,
Some seek it with a monoplane, some with a watering can.
Some find a thrill in braving death, and others weeks will toil
To grow one single perfect bloom in common yellow soil.

Against the odds of pests and clay all gardeners
pit their skill,
Who grows one perfect dahlia bloom will feel his
pulses thrill,
And who has fought the ahpis crew and raised one
lovely rose
Has had his thrill of battle and the joy of triumph
knows.

Song to the True Friend

Here's to the friend that is true!
To the Harry, the Tom and the Dick,
The particular John who will follow us on
Through weather that's sunny or thick;
Oh, whatever his name,
I sing to the fame
And the worth of the friend who will stick!

Here's to the friend you can trust!
To Walter and William and Joe,
The particular Fred, of whom you have said:
"He's the finest of fellows I know!"
Oh, whatever his name,
I sing to the fame
Of the friend who will go where you go!

Here's to the brave-hearted friend,
The Charley, the Edward or Jim,
The particular Frank on whom you can bank
When the last of your hopes has grown dim;
Oh, whatever his name,
I sing to his fame,
May the Lord shed His blessings on him!

Thoughts While Waiting for the Dentist

Three years ago it left the press,
A ten-cent magazine,
Still radiant is its outer dress,
Its pages still are clean.

Of course the jests are out of date,
The pictures out of style,
But, purchased at so low a rate,
They've lasted quite a while!

I'm sure for this old magazine
My dentist's love is strong,
Or otherwise 'twould not have been
Securely kept so long.

In those three years four teeth I've lost
And suffered cruel pains,
While here, though but a dime it cost,
This magazine remains.

That bridge he made three years ago
When first this book was born,
Though fitted where it doesn't show
No longer can be worn.

All things have changed since first I sat
And conned these pages o'er,
Except this magazine, and that
Looks good for ten years more!

About Dogs

I like the homely yellow dog
That no one wants to steal,
The pup of doubtful parentage
That follows close at heel;
The comfortable cur that romps
With genuine delight,
And has no beauty to be lost
When he is moved to fight.

Oh, you may have your thoroughbred,
Your dogs of fancy stock,
I'll take the mongrel pup instead
That roams the city block.
For if he runs when I get home
To wag his tail at me,
We two can be the best of friends
Without a pedigree.

Give me the sturdy, common dog
That's not inclined to roam,
But, should it prompted be to stray,
Can find his own way home.
Your handsome dog is whimsical,
'Twill often stop to board
With strangers, who await the day
You offer a reward.

I'll take the homely, faithful pup
  Devoted to us all,
Who has no wish to run away
  Or heed a stranger's call;
And though his legs imperfect are,
  His body queer to see,
He'll make up in devotion what
  He lacks in pedigree.

The Home at Peace

Here is a little world where children play
  And just a few red roses greet July;
  Above it smiles God's stretch of summer sky;
Here laughter rings to mark the close of day;
There is no greater splendor far away.
  Here slumber comes with all her dream supply,
  And friendship visits as the days go by;
Here love and faith keep bitterness at bay.
Should up this walk come wealth or smiling fame,
  Some little treasures might be added here,
But life itself would still remain the same:
  Love is no sweeter in a larger sphere.
This little world of ours wherein we live
Holds now the richest joys which life can give.

Friendly

Heigho, for the man with a smile on his face
And a couple of wrinkles of care,
And an eye that can twinkle, in spite of his place
Or the troubles he happens to bear.
He may not be rich and he may not be wise,
He may not be cultured and clean,
But you know from his grin and the look in his eyes
There is nothing about him that's mean.

There's a jest on his lips if it's laughter you need,
And there's pity, if pity you lack,
You know there is brotherly love in his creed,
You are sure he won't stab in the back.
It may be you never have seen him before,
But you feel he is kindly and true;
And you're never afraid when he comes to your door
That a wrong he is plotting to do.

There are millions of him the world over I'd say,
Men patient and happy and fair,
You can meet them by night and can meet them by day
No matter what raiment they wear,
And you know by the light in their eyes and the grin
Which they flash as they see you come near,
That their hearts are wide open to welcome you in
And there's nothing about them to fear.

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